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COVER PHOTO PAUL RYAN-GOFF

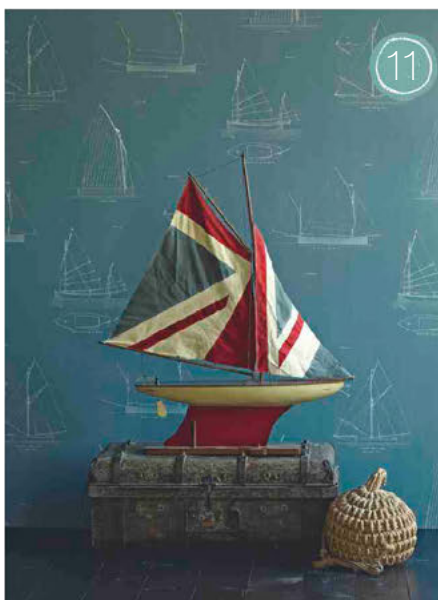
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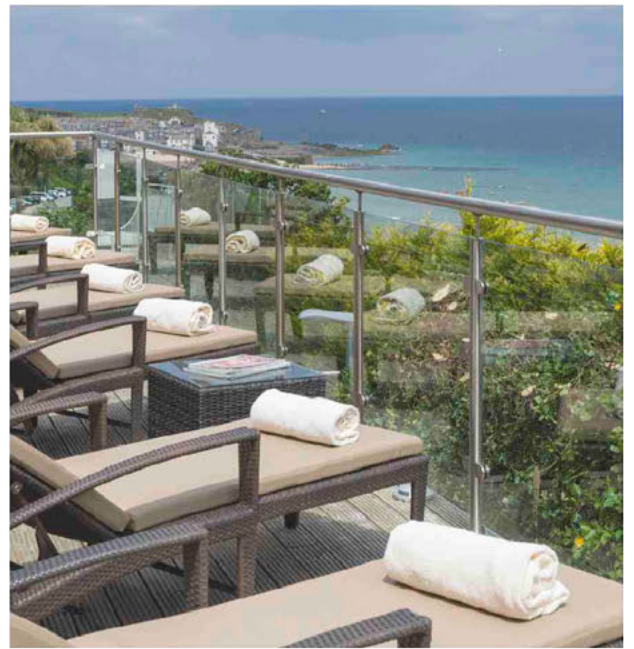
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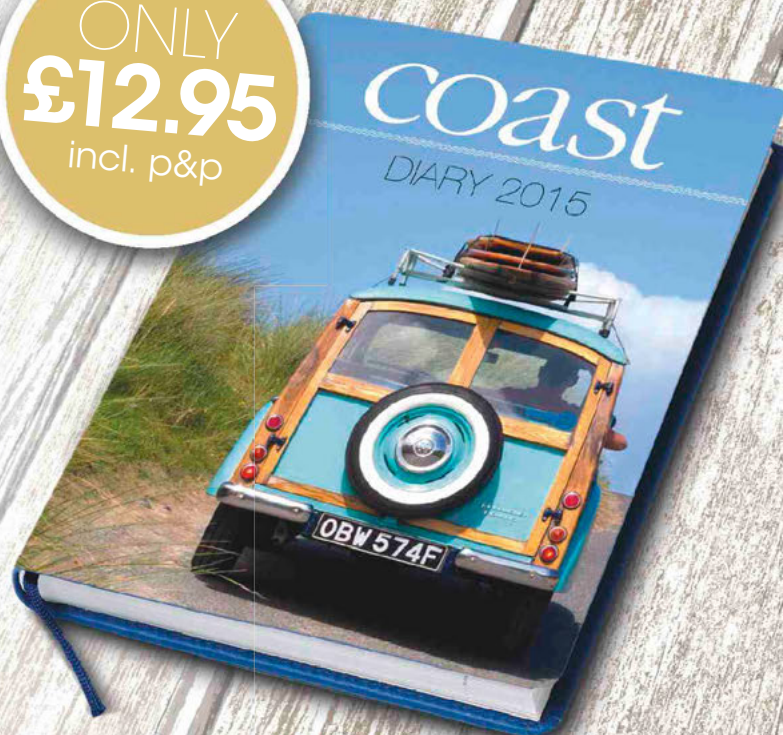
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What will you do in 2015 that you have never done before? What challenge will you set yourself? Maybe it's something simple: to take more walks by the sea or make an effort to keep in touch with friends in other parts of the country. Or perhaps this is going to be the year you change your life. Are you going to start that craft business you always dreamed of, plan that sailing trip on your bucket list, or move to the coast?

In this special issue I hope you'll find oodles of inspiration for whatever you are planning. You can hear how Laurence and Leonie created their dream beach bolthole on page 22, and look for new homes at top coastal destinations on page 41. Alternatively, if you are thinking of taking up a new coastal sport this year, how about freediving (pg 70) or cold water surfing (pg 76)? If you just need a bit of rest and recuperation, try our spa round-up on (pg 92). For me, it's simple, a little more time in nature, a little less time in front of a screen...

I'd love to hear from you to discover your perfect coastal pastime, your favourite way to spend a day by the sea or just to hear your views on **coast** magazine. You can get in touch via facebook and twitter, or email the team at coast.enquiries@kelsey.co.uk. For any subscription queries please email coast.mag@kelsey.co.uk.



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Alex

THE CREW

THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTORS *share their coastal musings*



ALF ALDERSON

Journalist Alf is based on the Pembrokeshire coast, having moved there for the laid-back surfer lifestyle over 25 years ago. He now flits between Wales and the French Alps, writing about adventure travel for newspapers and magazines, as well as for Rough Guides. Read his chilling account of a cold water surfing expedition on pg 76.

What new adventures do you have planned for 2015? I'd like to rekindle my enthusiasm for surfing – and the more prosaic 'adventure' of redecorating my home in Solva.



SHORE COTTAGE STUDIO

In 2012, Laura and Kris packed up their three children and moved back into Shore Cottage with Laura's mother Sue. Since then, they've built a stylish studio on the Wirral shoreline where they run creative courses in textiles, laser cutting and photography. On pg 98, they teach us how to jazz up old jam jars for the party season.

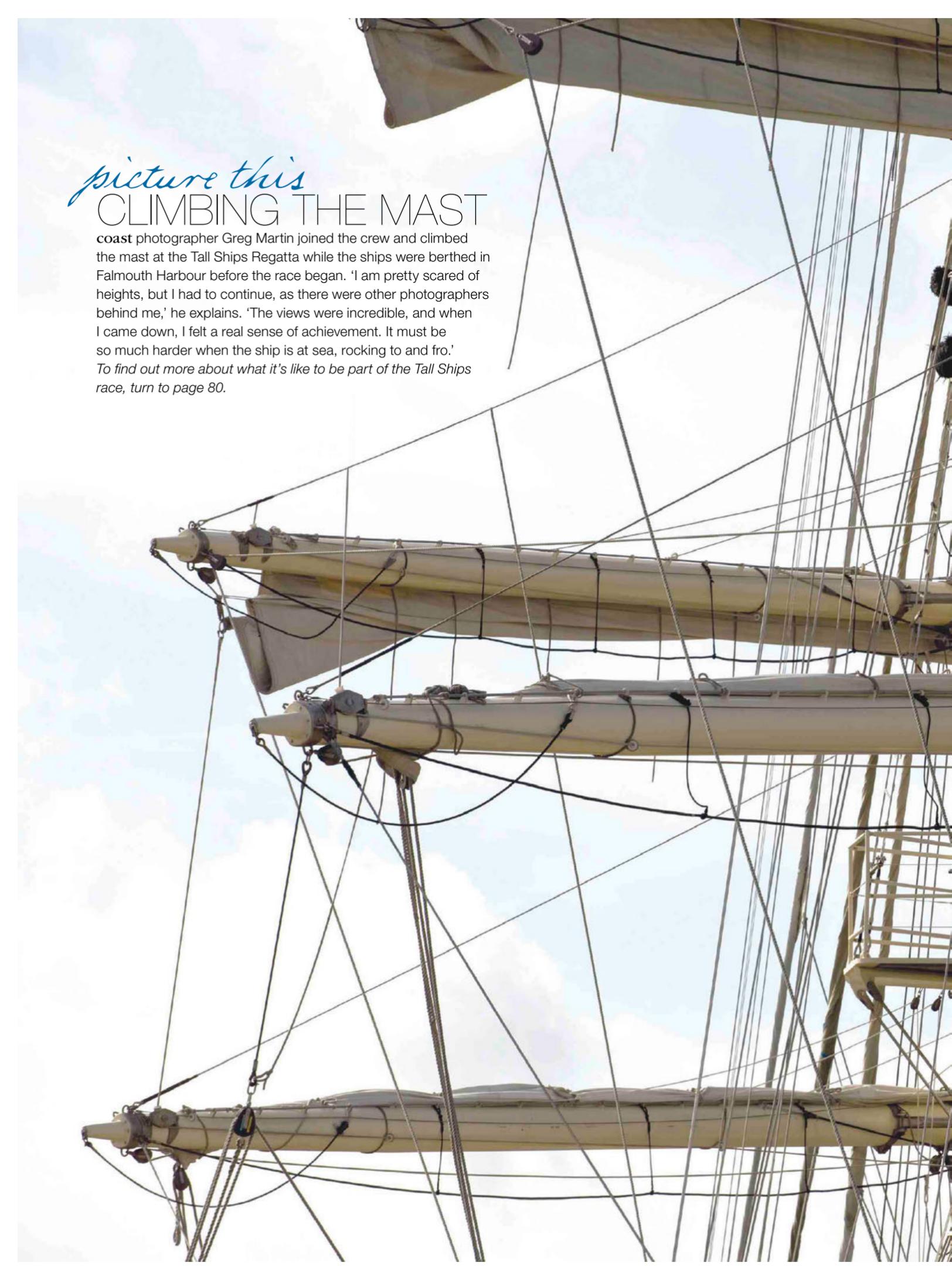
What new adventures do you have planned for 2015? We've been planning a lifestyle book of makes and recipes for ages, so this is the year we're going to make it happen.



CHRISTIAN McLEOD

Ireland-based photographer Christian first discovered a passion for cameras four years ago. Now his passion for adventure photography has seen him shoot

for brands such as O'Neill and Red Bull. On pg 60 he photographs a sailing adventure from Bangor in Ireland to the Hebrides in Scotland. **What new adventures do you have planned for 2015?** This winter I'll be based in Ireland, holding the first Kayak-based surfing expedition. As for the new year, I hope to be shooting more intense adventures abroad.



picture this
CLIMBING THE MAST

coast photographer Greg Martin joined the crew and climbed the mast at the Tall Ships Regatta while the ships were berthed in Falmouth Harbour before the race began. 'I am pretty scared of heights, but I had to continue, as there were other photographers behind me,' he explains. 'The views were incredible, and when I came down, I felt a real sense of achievement. It must be so much harder when the ship is at sea, rocking to and fro.'

To find out more about what it's like to be part of the Tall Ships race, turn to page 80.





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Beachcomber

Every month, we trawl the nation's coastline to bring you news of the people, places and exciting goings-on that are worth knowing about

• SHOPPING • EVENTS • PEOPLE • PLACES • CULTURE • NEWS • WILDLIFE •

FIND of the MONTH

*'Finisterre' wallpaper
by Linwood Fabrics at
Dupere Interior Design,
from £79.90 per 10m roll,
(linwoodfabric.com).*



CATCH *of the* DAY...

What's floating our boat this month



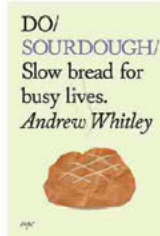
1 THESE SHOES

Style and practicality come together for this Ridgemont Outback design. The trendy, water-resistant and high-grip footwear keeps you prepared for any outdoor adventure (£109, ridgemontoutfitters.com).



2 THIS OIL

Perfectly sized for popping in your bag before a windy shoreline walk, this Essential Skin Face Oil is packed with natural ingredients to soothe wind-battered skin (£55, pureandlightorganic.eu).



3 THIS BOOK

Try your hand at a new skill this year with *Do Sourdough – Slow Bread For Busy Lives*. Written by baker Andrew Whitley, it has expert advice on how to bake the perfect loaf (£8.99, thedobook.co).

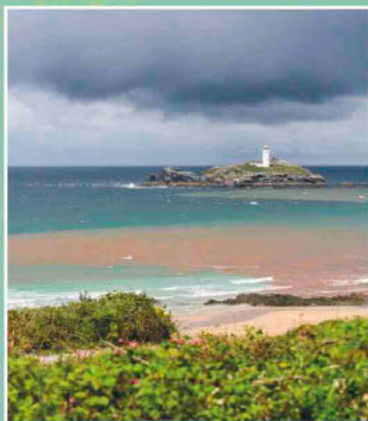


4 THIS SMOCK

Handmade on the Norfolk coast, this stylish drill cotton smock is a beach-walker's best friend; it's waterproof, wind-resistant and fades beautifully with age (£68, carriercompany.co.uk).

WHAT'S FLOATING YOUR BOAT? Let us know on our Facebook page, [facebook.com/coastmagazine](https://www.facebook.com/coastmagazine), or email us at coast.enquiries@kelsey.co.uk

PHOTOGRAPH CALLUM MORSE AT SALTSHOTS



DOWNLOAD NOW!

Those of you who have ever wondered about the water quality or pollution levels at your local beach will want to check out this new app from Surfers Against Sewage. The real-time Safer Seas Service app has teamed up with water companies and the Environment Agency to warn people of untreated sewage and diffuse pollution at 315 beaches across England and Wales. It's free to download for iPhones, iPads and mobile Android devices (sas.org.uk).

RECORD BREAKER!

On 21 September 2014, the Guinness World Record for the world's largest sailing race – 24 hours – was broken by 'Bart's Bash', a gigantic regatta that involved 18,000 people, 768 sailing clubs and 68 countries. Organised by The Andrew Simpson Sailing Foundation in Weymouth, the race has raised over £278,000 in memory of the late Olympic gold medallist, and for the charity (bartsbash.co.uk).



PHOTOGRAPH JAK BENNETT



RIDING THE WAVES

If you're looking for exciting surfing adventures, then this book is for you. Nicknamed 'The Surfers' Bible' by those in the know, it contains detailed surf reports for areas all around the British Isles as well as the rest of Europe. It's packed with beautiful images and guidance from local surfers, providing specific tide and wave break information to get you to the best locations. Here at coast, we think it's essential reading for novices and seasoned surfers alike. *The Stormrider Surf Guide: Europe* by Bruce Sutherland (£29.95) is available from lowpressure.co.uk and Amazon.



1 HELP CLEAN UP A BEACH

HAYLE

11 January

The New Year is all about making a fresh start, so try taking an environmentally friendly approach with a beach clean on the Cornish coast. They're held on the second Sunday of each month and help to protect the sand's 18,000 migrant and wintering waterfowl (rspb.org.uk).

2 CELEBRATE WITH A BANG

CROMER

1 January

After a stroll on the beach and fish-and-chip supper, see sparks fly in this pretty north Norfolk seaside town as New Year's Day celebrations begin. A fireworks display will rise from the pier and out over the sea (cromertown.org).

3 TRY A NEW HOBBY

BRIGHTON

1, 8, 22, 29 January

Are you looking for something new to do in 2015? Then slide on your tap shoes for a beginner's dance class at Bird Studios that's bound to put a spring in your step. Run by tutor Drew Wood, classes take place every Thursday evening (birdstudios.co.uk).

4 EAT HEALTHILY

NEWQUAY

All year round

Feed your post-Christmas detox diet with plenty of omega-3 at Zacry's, a newly opened restaurant on the beach at Watergate Bay. We love the sound of the lemon sole with baby potatoes, brown shrimp and capers, and the Loch Duart salmon with purple sprouting broccoli and anchovy hollandaise, too (watergatebay.co.uk).

5 DISCOVER IRISH CULTURE

COUNTY DOWN

All year round

Travel through time and find out more about the history of dance, from the late 1800s to present day, at *A Step in Time: The Story of Irish Dance* in Hollywood. Visitors can expect to see costumes and embroidery, as well as vintage images and film (nmni.com).



6 GAZE AT STARRY SKIES

ISLE OF COLL

24-25 January

Escape to 'Coll & The Cosmos' for a short break, and take a journey through our solar system. Expert astronomers will teach novices about using telescopes, as well as offer fascinating views of the sun (collbunkhouse.com).



7 VISIT THE SEALS

WIRRAL PENINSULA **All year round**

Breathe the salty sea air and feel refreshed after the Christmas season on a trip along the Wirral coast. Seafarers can expect to see playful grey seals and learn about the feeding, breeding and behaviour of peregrines, brent geese and massed waders (rspb.org.uk).

8 ELATE YOUR EARDRUMS

NEWPORT

24 January

Listen to violins, violas and cellos at an Isle of Wight Symphony Orchestra concert, as musicians perform dramatic overtures and solos (visitisleofwight.co.uk).

10 LEARN ABOUT LIGHTHOUSES

LONDON

22 December 2014 – 2 January 2015

The National Maritime Museum is hosting *The Lighthouse Keeper* event, where wise keepers will pass on their knowledge. Closed 24-26 December (rmg.co.uk).

9 RUN LIKE THE WIND

ISLE OF ANGLESEY

17 January

Head out on a series of coastal trail races, kicking off from Breakwater Country Park. Choose from distances of 6.5, 15.5, 27.6 or 33 miles (visitwales.com).



Nathan Outlaw's DISH OF THE MONTH

A straightforward recipe
with stunning results



RAW BRILL *with* RAPESEED OIL, ORANGE *and* TARRAGON

This recipe is a fine example of treating the freshest and best quality fish very simply to appreciate its qualities to the full. You need to hone your knife skills to get the fish nice and thin, though if you cut it into small cubes, it will work equally well. Orange and tarragon are a lovely combination and work extremely well with raw fish. When blood oranges are in season, do use them – they make the dish look even more stunning.

Serves 6 as a starter

- 1 brill, about 2kg
- 2 oranges
- A handful of fine tarragon leaves
- 100ml cold-pressed extra virgin rapeseed oil
- Cornish sea salt

- 1 Fillet and skin the brill, then freeze overnight.
- 2 Allow the brill to thaw slightly until you can cut it, then slice it as thinly as possible. Lay the fish slices out evenly on large serving plates and season with sea salt.
- 3 Peel and segment the oranges, removing the pith and membrane, then cut into small pieces.
- 4 Distribute the bits of orange and tarragon evenly over the plates. Drizzle with the rapeseed oil and season with sea salt. Serve at room temperature.

COOL CAFÉ

Every month, coast contributors recommend their favourite eateries. This month, Lane Ashfeldt eats at Coast Saundersfoot in Pembrokeshire

WHET MY APPETITE Situated at Coppet Hall Beach, grand flavours match up to the majestic scenery, with a wide variety of creatively presented local seafood meals.

WHAT'S ON THE MENU? For brunch, take a full breakfast, or experiment with mushroom and truffled spinach on toast. For lunch or dinner, start with a shellfish soup or a goat's cheese salad, then choose a fresh fish dish, expertly prepared by chef Will Holland — anything from seared scallops to John Dory.

HOW'S THE MOOD? Calm, relaxed and open. Between swims, you can grab a coffee at the informal beach-level café downstairs, but for impressive views, you'll want to spend time at the upper-level terraced restaurant.

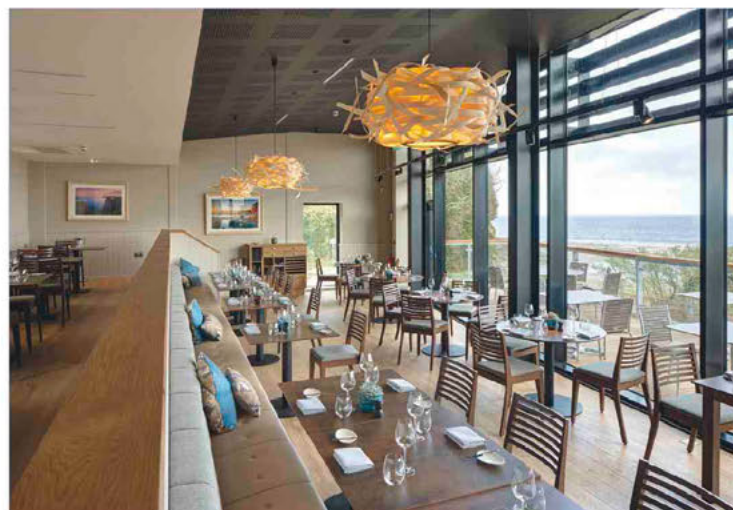
CAN I SEE THE SEA? It's unmissable. The terrace, bar and restaurant command panoramic views

across the sands of Coppet Hall, the bay and rocky headlands to the right, where a two-hour hike along the Wales Coast Path will bring you to Tenby Harbour.

WHAT'S THE DAMAGE? Nibbles cost from £4, starters £8. Fish fingers, chips and crushed peas costs £15, and a half lobster £25. Desserts such as poached peach with ice cream and meringue cost £8. Children may eat half-size portions of any meal at half price. Extensive wine and champagne list available to suit a range of pockets.

OPENING TIMES Daily throughout the summer, 10.30am to 11pm; last dinner orders at 9.30pm. In winter, 10.30am to 11pm, Wednesday to Saturday, and 10.30am to 4.30pm, Sunday; last orders at 3pm.

Coast Saundersfoot, Coppet Hall Beach, Pembrokeshire (01834 810800, coastsaundersfoot.co.uk).



Coast character

Tresco Abbey Garden's curator MIKE NELHAMS on his love of island life and how weather and its effect on the sea shapes the botanical oasis

INTERVIEW **Rachel Homer** PHOTOGRAPH **Jon Spong**

The first thing I do in the morning is look at my windsock to determine the wind direction, as its reading will direct my day. The weather is the most important factor in maintaining the exotic plants and we are so in tune with the sea that it is part of the garden's landscape. My work involves looking after 17 acres of a botanical garden that is like no other in Britain, possibly Europe. We grow 20,00 species of sub-tropical plants from coastal regions all over the world.

As a student at RHS Wisley, my strongest interest was tender plants, and I was lucky enough to gain a scholarship

at Tresco Abbey Garden, part of the Isles of Scilly. I was invited back in 1984 as head gardener and am now curator. The garden's success is not just its variety of plants, but the fact it's positioned on this beautiful island.

Abbey Garden is so diverse: on a wet day, I enjoy walking around the area surrounded by large leaf trees from tropical regions shining in the rain; or, when the sun is shining, the Top Terrace explodes with colour, so your experience changes immensely. During the winter months, when most gardens in Britain are at their lowest ebb, Tresco's plants

from the Southern Hemisphere are merrily flowering away, giving us an all-round display.

Island living is very different from the mainland; you're close to everything and everyone, so the feeling of community is unique. My memories of family holidays as a child were the excitement of that first glimpse of the sea as you drive out of the valley. It was special then, and now I get the same feeling every time I return home to Tresco. I am working with plants I love in a place I love.

For more information, visit tresco.co.uk or follow on twitter @tresco_island.



BEST BOLTHOLE

Crantock Bay Apartments, Cornwall

WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

Crantock Bay Hotel has recently transformed into luxury self-catering apartments. Each one has a slightly different style, but all benefit from the absolutely stunning views across the Atlantic that the former hotel enjoyed. **ANY LUXURIOUS TOUCHES?** All of the apartments have underfloor heating, large flat-screen TVs, complimentary Wi-Fi and iPod docking stations, along with an outside store for wetsuits and surfboards. There is also an indoor pool and tennis courts.

WHAT ARE THE ROOMS LIKE? We stayed in Apartment 3 and the décor was so serene and beautifully thought through that I relaxed the moment

I entered. Think thick cream rugs, huge cushions, woollen throws and pale wood flooring and work surfaces. The walls were decorated with delicate and unusual work created by Japanese artist Oi Nuen Sprunt, adding interest to the calm ambience.

BEST SEA VIEW? All of the apartments have amazing views of the sea and Crantock Bay. It's a glorious vista across the Atlantic or the sandy expanse of the fantastic surfing beach that is walking distance from the property.

HOW ABOUT THE FOOD? There is an on-site bistro, serving breakfast, lunch, homemade cakes and smoothies during the day, as well as supper in the



evenings. Dishes include lemon-scented crab on toast and roast squash gnocchi with truffle oil.

WHAT WILL IT COST? The apartments sleep from four to eight people. A long weekend in low season for four people starts at £399. However, if you turn to page 96 and enter this month's coast competition, you could win a stay for six people for free!



Crantock Bay Apartments, Crantock, Cornwall TR8 5SE (01637 830229, crantockbay.co.uk).
Alex Fisher

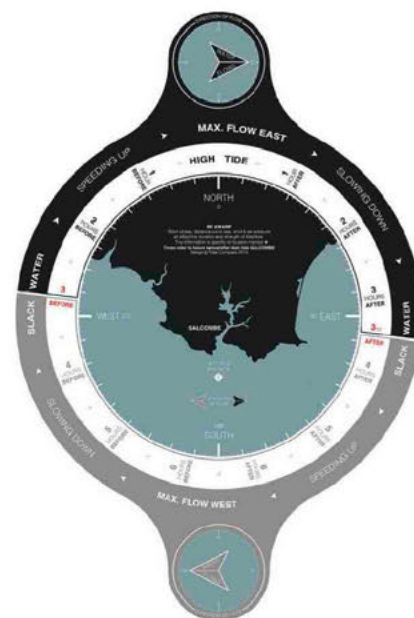


Fancy food

Planning a New Year's Eve party? Then try the smoked treats from Staal Smokehouse. Sourced from sustainable farms on the west coast of Scotland, the salmon comes in three styles – dry cured with a blend of oak and apple; brined and cold smoked; and Scandinavian gravadlax with fresh dill. If you're feeling indulgent, splash out on the decadent smoked duck, too (staalSmokehouse.co.uk).

CHARTING THE SEA

RNLI volunteer and PADI rescue diver William Thomson is helping to keep surfers, kayakers and paddling tots safe at sea with the design of a new location-specific chart, Tidal Compass. The chart maps the changing direction, speed and time of the tide, meaning sea-goers can time their water-based activities when the sea is at its safest. Beautifully designed, the Tidal Compass looks great as a practical piece of art, and the ink is guaranteed to last 100 years (tidalcompass.com).



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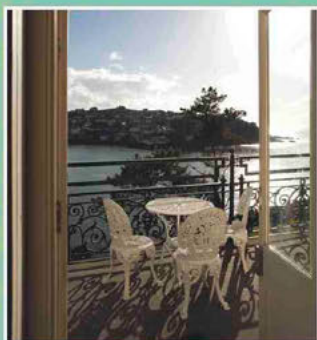
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HOT HOTEL

THE FOWEY HOTEL, CORNWALL



WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

One of a number of luxury properties owned by the Richardson Group, a family business, this purpose-built hotel exudes authentic Victorian charm. There are archetypically British lawned gardens, where afternoon tea is served, and a lovely old lift that transports you back

to the time when Daphne du Maurier was a regular visitor.

ANY LUXURIOUS TOUCHES? Complimentary toiletries, flat-screen TVs, free Wi-Fi and spa baths in some of the rooms.

WHAT ARE THE ROOMS LIKE? There are 37 individually styled bedrooms, all with en-suite bathrooms and tea and coffee-making facilities. The rooms are decorated in a fresh, modern fashion, with splashes of bold colour.

BEST SEA VIEW? Book a room that looks out over the Fowey Estuary – my favourites are the ones with little verandas. The Honeymoon Suite, with a private roof terrace, has the best view.

HOW ABOUT THE FOOD? The food in the hotel restaurant, which holds an AA Rosette for fine dining, is sublime. Head chef Mark Griffiths really knows what he is doing, beautifully presenting and perfectly cooking each dish. I love a restaurant that refuses to use steak knives because they guarantee their steaks are so tender you won't need one.

WHAT WILL IT COST? A standard twin starts at just £79 B&B for two people during low season. Alternatively, take advantage of the winter special, which costs just £99 per room and includes B&B and a three-course meal.

HOW DO I BOOK? Call 0800 005 2244 or visit thefoweyhotel.co.uk.

Alex Fisher



FLASH, BANG, WALLOP!

What a picture: this month's reader snap

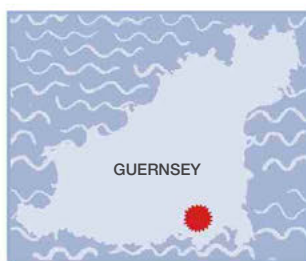
— 1946 —

coast reader **Jenny Luscombe** sent us this family photo of her younger self with her mother and grandparents at **Selsey Bill**. She says, 'I've always loved the sea. I learned to swim off the beach in Southsea and retired to the northeast of Scotland, where I live by the harbour with a view across the firth.'



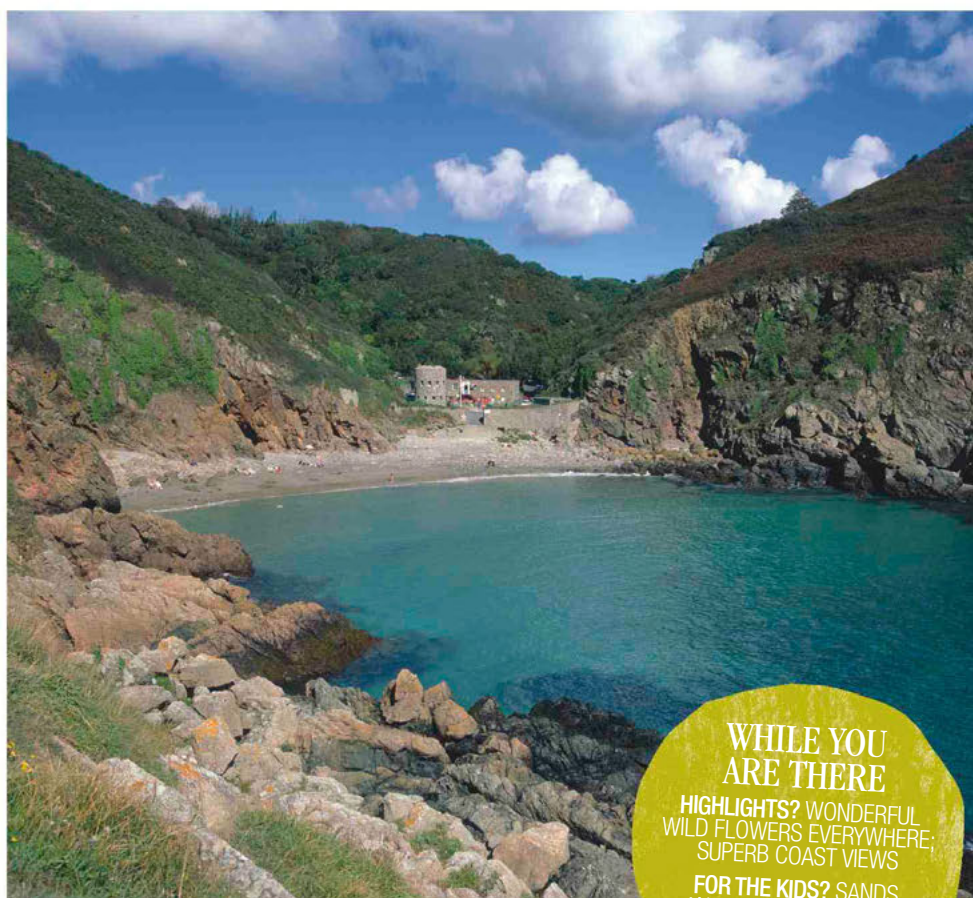
A CLEANER COAST

Broken Beatles records, sharp needles and a 30-year-old crisp packet are just a few of the items that Cumbrian John Watson (above) has come across during his beachcombing challenge. Scouring the Walney Nature Reserve near Barrow-in-Furness, John has spent 35 weeks cleaning the shoreline of litter and making the area safe for beach-goers and resident wildlife alike. Last year, he picked up 1.6 tonnes of rubbish and intends to keep going until March 2015, when he'll leave the ground birds to nest (furnesswasteconsortium.org.uk).



WALK *of the* MONTH

Down between flowery hedgebanks to *Petit Bôt Bay*, then a clifftop path to the rugged cove of *Le Gouffre*, and back by the smuggler's parish of *The Werewolf* BY **Christopher Somerville**



LE CHÊNE, PETIT BÔT BAY AND LE GOUFFRE (Guernsey)

DISTANCE 3.5 MILES • TIME ALLOW 2 HOURS DIFFICULTY

1 STARTING OUT

Drop down the 'pedestrians only' green lane, pass **The Manor Hotel** and fork left, descending steeply to beautiful little **Petit Bôt Bay**.

2 PETIT BÔT BAY

A wide stretch of sand lies between the granite headlands at

low tide. Overlooking the beach is an **old fortified tower**, built in the 1770s to warn off the French.

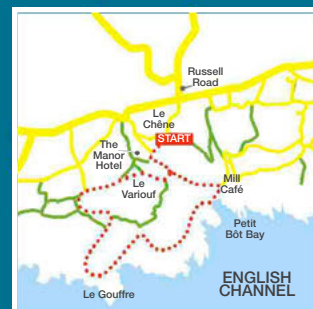
3 CLIFF PATH TO LE GOUFFRE

Steep steps climb the cliff. You brush through a forest of wild flowers on your way to **Le Gouffre**, a fantastically rugged headland

where fishing boats are hauled up to spend the winter high up on cliff ledges.

4 BEWARE THE WEREWOLF!

Make your way back to **Le Chêne** through tiny lanes, passing through **Le Variouf** – 'Werewolf Country', a story put about by smugglers to deter law-abiding citizens.



NEED TO KNOW

GETTING THERE: Bus routes 11, 91, 92, 93 to Le Chêne Hotel.

ROAD: Beside Le Chêne Hotel (junction of Forest Road and Russell Road), take lane opposite Russell Road; park (neatly!) on first right bend.

LANDSCAPE: Rugged granite cliffs, sea vistas, flowery lanes.

REFUELLING OPTIONS: The Mill Café, Petit Bôt Beach, for drinks, snacks and meals.

MAP: 'The Walking Map of Guernsey', or 'Perry's Guide Maps of Guernsey'.

PARKING: As above, or start from public car park at Petit Bôt Beach.

PUBLIC TOILETS: Petit Bôt Beach.





shoal

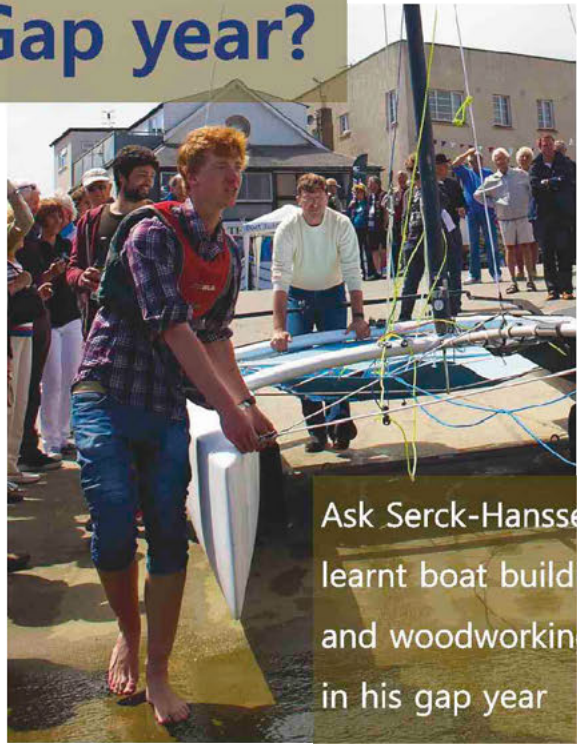
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and woodworking
in his gap year

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Maya's passion for the nation's coastline was borne out of a childhood spent by the sea, where her fascination with rockpooling evolved into a career as a marine ecologist and author. She has made her home on the Devon coastline with her family, where she spends her days diving, kayaking and educating school children on the wonders of the sea.

MARINE LIFE

coast's columnist *Maya Plass* tells us why having a dog has allowed her to appreciate the stunning coastal scenery even more when the weather is bad

ILLUSTRATION **Rosie Scott**

This time last year we welcomed a puppy into our home. Since Boo's arrival we've had moments of frustration as we battled with his insatiable appetite for flip-flops, the sofa and anything else he can lay his paws on. He has also become our favourite four-legged companion.

Today was a reminder of why Boo is such an asset. This morning I woke to his gentle whimper. At this ungodly hour, there was but a glimmer of the sun rising and I felt a bit of animosity towards my canine friend for his rude wake-up alarm.

WEATHER WARNING

The weather was howling more than Boo ever has. I dragged myself out of the house with Boo jumping and wagging his tail, oblivious to how annoyed I was for being woken up so early. But my mood soon changed. The heavy rain, wild wind and inky blue skies washed away any of my disgruntled feelings and replaced them with overwhelming awe. This powerful weather front is also created by my

beloved oceans. I arrived home feeling calm to carry on with my family duties of making packed lunches and chivying everyone along.

BEACH WALK

By lunch time, Boo persistently reminded me he was ready for a second bout of coastal air. The landscape had taken on an altogether different feel. On the seashore, I looked to the west and the clouds were pregnant with monsoon-like rain. The darkness was so intense but yet the colour of the shoreline was lit up by the sun in the east. As I looked to the east, the skies were clear and bright while the seashore remained shaded by the cliffs.

I stopped to take in the beautiful contrast until Boo rolled his ball towards my feet to remind me why we were here. If I didn't have Boo, I'm not sure I'd have ventured out into the elements. I'd advise anyone who is considering getting a dog to think about it carefully – and the effect it might have on your household items. However, Boo is worth all the furniture he has destroyed, purely for dragging me out in all weathers. Because, when it comes to heading to the beach, there's no such thing as bad weather, just bad clothing.

'I looked to the west and the DARKNESS OF THE CLOUDS was SO INTENSE but yet the COLOUR OF THE SHORELINE was lit up by the sun in the east'





THE HOUSE IN THE DUNES

When the bungalow where Laurence Delamar holidayed as a boy came on the market, he knew he had to make it his own. With the help of his partner Leonie Nanassy, he's made it a dream retreat

WORDS **Alex Fisher** PHOTOGRAPHS **Paul Ryan-Goff**

The stylish dream
house on Mawgan
Porth Beach,
Cornwall



When you park outside The Dunes it's impossible to imagine what is hidden behind the high white-washed walls which separate the property from the road. So as I opened the door into the courtyard, I was amazed. Here was the perfect beach house: a white wooden home, surrounded by sand. Despite being positioned on the popular Mawgan Porth Beach, the rolling dunes offer total privacy and, after I closed the door behind me, I felt like I'd stepped into another world.

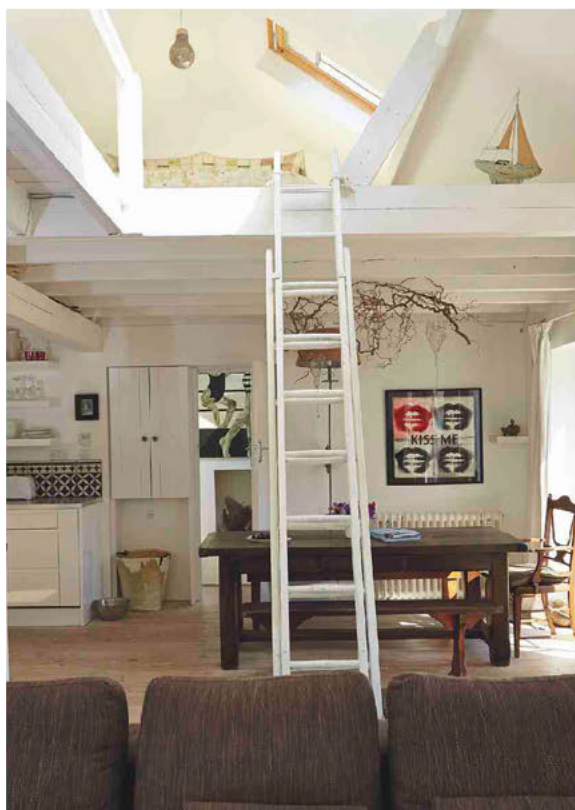
FILLED WITH SUNSHINE

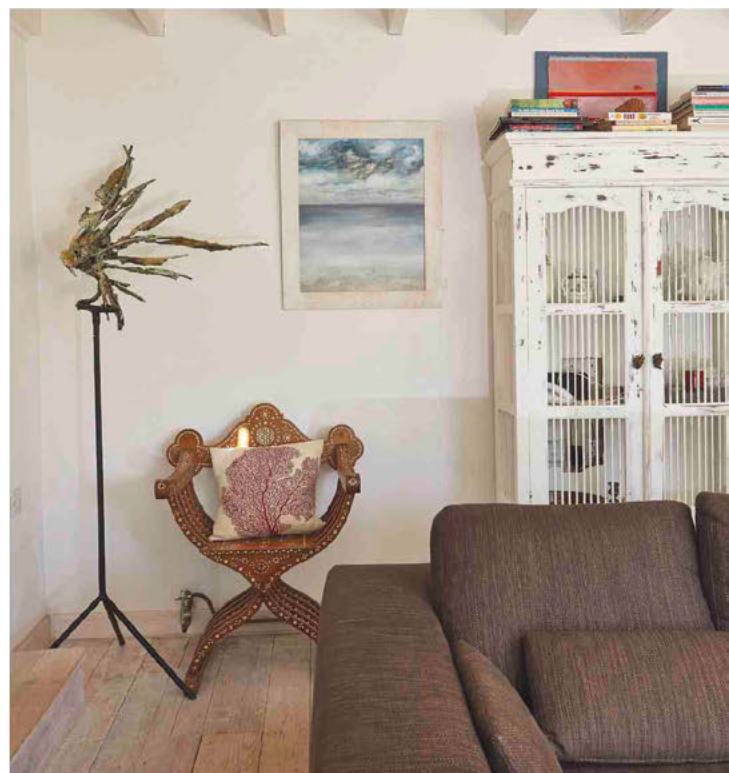
To my left, a metal sculpture showed fish swimming through the air; ahead of me, clumps of orange flowers decorated the dunes and, to my right, the expansive wooden decking told me that the owners love to live their life outdoors. It was clear that not only do they lounge, read, dine and entertain in the open, but they also bathe. Tucked into a corner was a beautiful freestanding bath complete with shower and soap. I have never been to another property in the UK that has felt more filled with sunshine than this. It has an Antipodean feel, in that the outside space is just as important as the inside. 'That's the way we designed it,' events director and Esalen massage therapist Leonie explains. 'If I could give people one bit of advice when renovating a home, it would be to budget for the outdoor space from the beginning. Don't leave it as an afterthought – and don't underestimate the amount of pleasure these areas will give you.'

Inside, the property has an equally elegant, but relaxed feel. 'We have a dog,' Laurence says, patting the gorgeous springer spaniel lolling on the floor, 'so we can't be too precious. We needed somewhere that would just dust off and brush up without too much effort.' The house, he explains, has been transformed from the one he visited as a child. 'We holidayed here for years, and when I first brought Leonie here, about 10 years ago, it was still a dark brick bungalow with paper sheets and bunk beds.' The couple laugh. 'She wasn't impressed,' Laurence smiles.

HAPPY CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

Over the years, Laurence had got to know the owners of the bungalow and when he heard that they were thinking about selling, he was determined to have the property for his family to enjoy as well. 'I had so many





CLOCKWISE, FROM ABOVE LEFT
The open-plan kitchen and dining room provides the perfect space for entertaining; Leonie adds unique touches to the décor with unusual paintings and sculptures; from the house it is possible to follow the paths through the sand dunes directly on to Mawgan Porth Beach. The couple have carefully chosen decorative pieces for outside the property as well as inside; a ladder leads up to a useful loft space



CLOCKWISE, FROM ABOVE Leonie made the cushions on the bed from an old scarf, and picked up the beside table lamps in Paris; the couple's innovative style is influenced by their travels around the world; intricate latticework makes up a wood door; seaside finds turn a small alcove into an interesting focal point; Leonie enjoys entertaining in the kitchen





happy childhood memories of being here,' he says, 'that it already felt like a part of my life. This whole area means a lot to me. I would stay here with my parents, and my uncle, who was in the RAF, used to stay in the family quarters at the Watergate Bay Hotel, just down the road.

'I spent two years trying to buy the house, but as the owners lived abroad, it was tricky to progress anything. Finally, they had a burst pipe in the winter, the property flooded and then needed to be gutted. At this point the house went on the open market and I managed to persuade the owners to sell it to me.'

The couple had already renovated other properties together, and run a luxury 12-bedroom retreat and party venue in Devon, so they knew that taking on the project wasn't going to be a problem. 'We work well together,' says Leonie. 'Laurence has fantastic ideas, and we push each other on.' They stuck to the original template of the building, cladding the brick walls with wood, and opened it up to the light by adding bigger windows and glass doors, which lead on to a large decked area.

FLAIR AND ORIGINALITY

Leonie's previous career in art, fashion and styling, coupled with the pair's love of international travel, ensured the interiors would be unique and innovative. Splashes of colour and unusual works of art liven a neutral background, creating a space full of flair and originality. Leonie made the colourful cushions that sit against a lattice woodwork bed headrest from an old scarf; the table lights are from Paris; a screen came from India, and the orange flowers that dance on the breeze outside were imported from California. 'This place has everything we love. We have brought our eclectic passions together, under one roof. We are always so busy, this house is our little getaway, our love shack,' says Leonie. 'Just as Laurence had family time here as a child, his daughter, Natasha, has also had the opportunity to holiday here, and now that she studies in London, it's her retreat, too.'

Having worked in the arena of health and wellness for many years, Laurence and Leonie feel passionate about how coastal life impacts on mental and physical wellbeing. 'I love hiking with the dog and the cliff walks around here are stunning,' says Laurence. 'I feel more relaxed when I'm here. It's about feeling connected to the outdoors, to the ocean and to nature.' Leonie would go as far as to say that

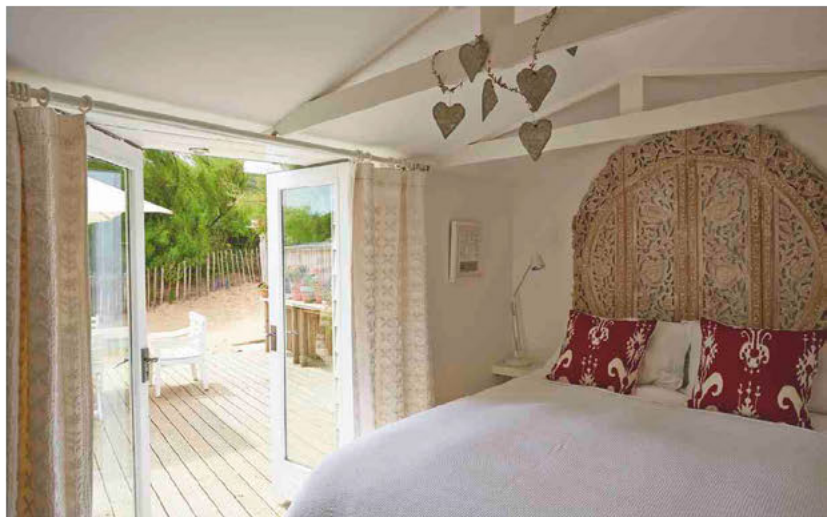




LEONIE'S 5 FAVOURITE PLACES AROUND MAWGAN PORTH

- 1 The wild beach at Bedruthan Steps is a short cliff walk away. 'I love it for its beauty, washed sands, craggy rocks and caves.'
- 2 The Park Café (mawganporth.co.uk). 'The food here is fresh, healthy and cooked with love.'
- 3 The Scarlet Hotel (scarlethotel.co.uk). 'This place serves the best tea on the terrace, with delicious homemade scones and biscuits.'
- 4 Retorrack Mill (retorrackmill.co.uk). 'You can't beat the Mill for its lively weekend gigs and nightlife.'
- 5 Disco Beads shop (discobeads.com). 'I go here for friendly chat and the best anklets and bracelets which make great presents.'





'the sea speaks to you. It calls: GET OUTSIDE! LOOK AT THE VIEW!' she laughs. 'When we are here, we are outside all the time. We're not watching telly. We're not glued to a computer screen. This is a little sun-trap; I've even sunbathed here in November. A hot bath outside in the winter, when it's raining, is wonderful. It's invigorating and energising. The elements combat any feelings of melancholy or depression that one might have. As long as you have the right kit on, you can be outside in any weather.'

As well as spending time on the beach, Laurence and Leonie also love the village of Mawgan Porth. 'It has such a great community feeling,' says Laurence. 'When I was a child, most businesses closed in the winter, but that has really changed. The holiday season has extended, and now many of the restaurants and cafés stay open all year. There is a very energetic year-round surfing community, too; it's a bit like being at a surf version of a ski resort – social and fun, but all based around a sport. We love the Café at the Park, which is just five minutes' away. They concentrate on good quality local food, and we're in there all the time. The Scarlet Hotel is just up the road, and they have a fantastic spa – you really have everything you need here.'

The couple's busy life in event organisation and retreats means that they live between Hampshire, Devon, Cornwall and the US. However, they try to spend as much time as possible here at their

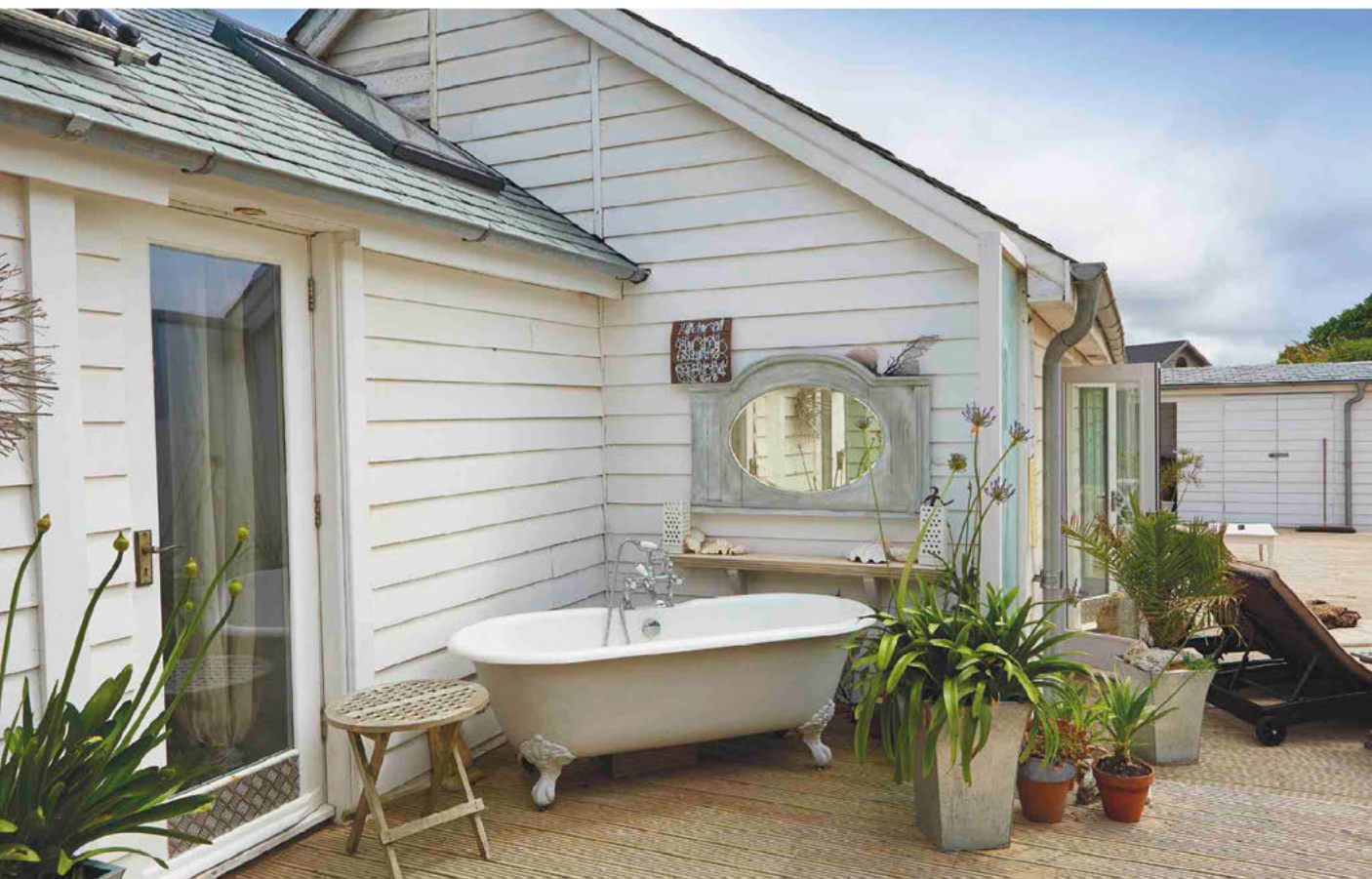


CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT

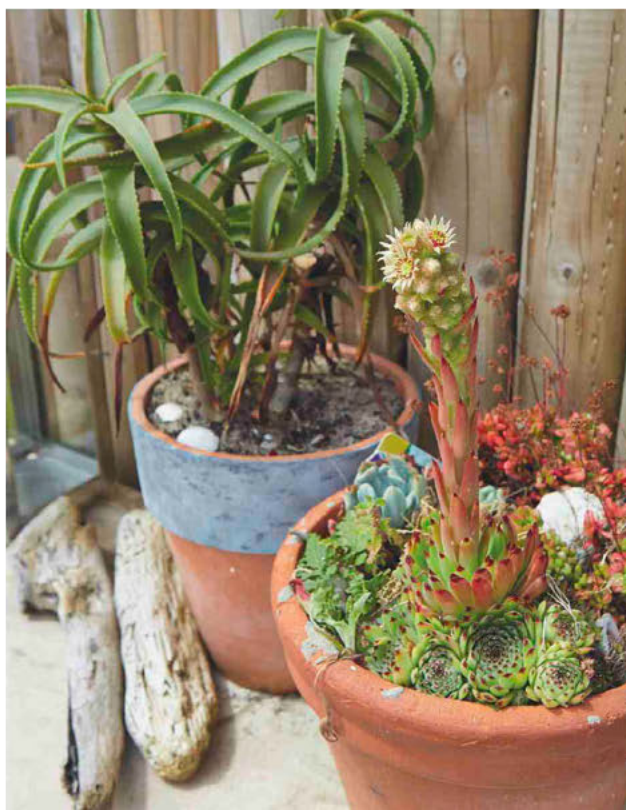
Laurence and Leonie like to spend as much time as possible outside in the open throughout the year; the Moroccan-influenced tiles make a feature of the basin in the bathroom; the doors from the bedroom open directly on to the decking; coastal works of art and an elegant mirror liven up a neutral background



RIGHT Leonie and Laurence enjoy long walks across the beach with their springer spaniel
BELOW The couple don't just entertain outside, they bathe in the open, too: 'A hot bath outside in the winter, when it's raining, is wonderful,' says Leonie. 'It's invigorating and energising'



RIGHT Succulent plants bring an Antipodean feel to the outdoor space
CENTRE Unusual fish sculptures greet visitors as they enter the private sandy courtyard
FAR RIGHT The cheerful orange flowers that dance on the breeze outside were imported from California





beach retreat. When they're not around, they invite friends to enjoy their much-loved property. This year they plan to offer The Dunes to other holidaymakers as well. 'It is such a wonderful place, it seems a shame not to share it. We've travelled the globe and seen some fabulous beaches,' says Laurence, 'but at the end of the day, the beaches right here are the best in the world.'

For more information on how to rent The Dunes, visit thedunescornwall.co.uk or call 07974 385842 or 01769 580123. To find out more about Leonie's healthy lifestyle retreats, visit handsonlife.co.uk, and for Esalen massage, esalen.org.

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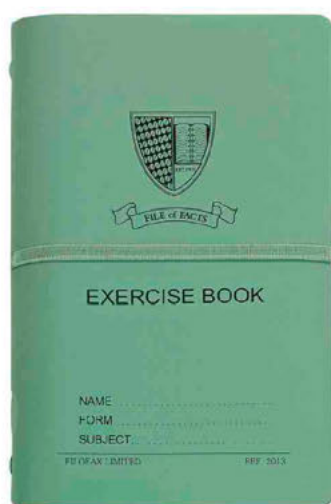
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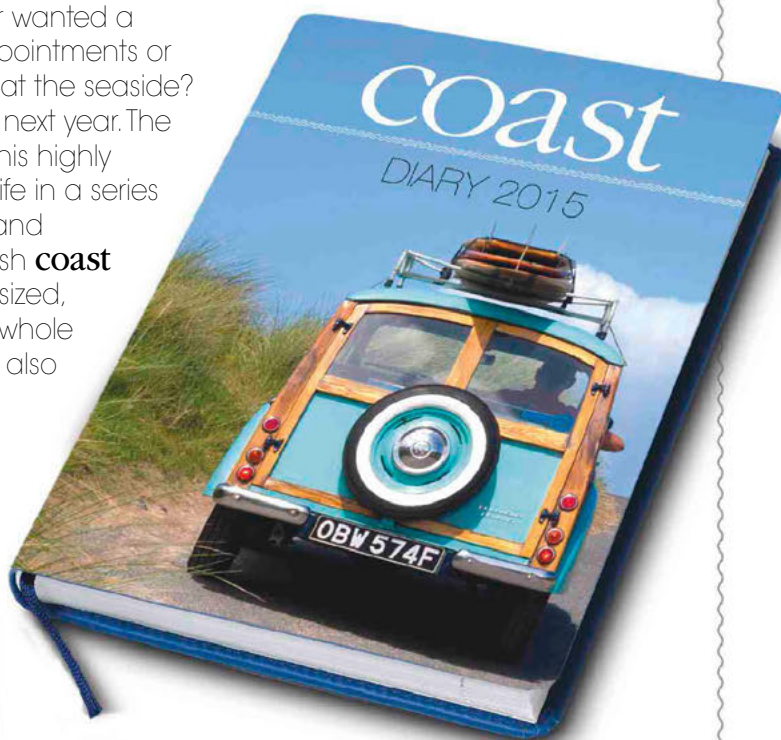
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THE COASTAL WARDROBE

Fashion stylist *Polly Banks* brings together some winter warmers that include a faux fur coat, statement sweaters and stylish accessories



- 1** Evie crew-neck **sweater**, £80, Henri Lloyd **2** Animal print **sweater**, £175, Maison Scotch at Scotch & Soda **3** Chunky chain **necklace**, £80, Jaeger **4** Wool pom-pom **beanie**, £34.95, Scotch & Soda **5** Jacquard print **trousers**, £38, Star by Julien Macdonald at Debenhams **6** Felt **hat**, £50, Maison Scotch at Scotch & Soda **7** Elsa black faux fur **coat**, £290, Parka London **8** Cooper leather **purse**, £45, Jaeger **9** Hartford **boots** £190, Henri Lloyd **10** Leather **gloves**, £44.95, Massimo Dutti

THE COASTAL WARDROBE

For the man who loves the great outdoors, a duck down jacket, chunky knit jumper and insulated boots will help keep *him* warm in cold weather



FOR WHERE TO BUY, SEE STOCKISTS PAGE

- 1** Best of British camel **CORDS**, £99, Marks & Spencer **2** Solent heavy down **PARKA**, £425, Henri Lloyd **3** Water-resistant nylon **BAG**, €178, Swims
4 Chunky rib **SOCKS**, £12, Jaeger **5** Limited edition **JEANS**, £64.95, Massimo Dutti **6** Columbia Bugaboot leather **BOOTS**, £100, Surfdome
7 Patagonia Classic Retro-X **JACKET**, £220, Surfdome **8** Charcoal knit **SWEEATER**, £300, Harry Stedman
9 Halcon lightweight down **GILET**, £95, Henri Lloyd **10** Nubuck **GLOVES**, £64.95, Massimo Dutti



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& STUBBS



Near Rye, East Sussex £675,000

A detached family house set in good sized gardens with far reaching rural views to the front and rear. Four reception rooms, kitchen/breakfast room & five en suite bedrooms. Double Garage. EPC rating D.



Rye, East Sussex £285,000

An attached two bedroom mews style property forming part of a modern development centrally located within the Conservation Area of the Ancient Town with a courtyard garden and allocated parking. EPC rating E



Winchelsea, East Sussex £729,000

A beautifully presented detached five bedroom period house set in well laid out gardens in the Conservation Area of the Ancient Town with far reaching views across the Brede Valley. Large garage with storage, Front courtyard, Rear garden 100' X 70'. EPC rating E



Guestling, East Sussex £315,000

A detached Grade II Listed thatched three bedroom cottage situated off a country lane in established gardens backing onto open farmland with an attached unconverted barn and garage.



Winchelsea £650,000

A detached Grade II Listed period house of late eighteenth century origin situated in the Conservation Area of the Ancient Town. Three reception rooms including 25' drawing room, four bedrooms, attached garage & small partly walled garden.



Near Camber, East Sussex £295,000

A detached two bedroom single storey coastal property situated in the hamlet of Jury's Gap, literally opposite the beach which forms part of Camber Sands. Garden. Garage. EPC rating C. An ideal second home or holiday let investment.

RYE OFFICE 01797 227338
MAYFAIR OFFICE 0870 112 7099

phillipsandstubbs.co.uk

20 HOMES *to buy* BESIDE *the* SEA...

From a picturesque SCOTTISH CROFT to a luxury seafront apartment and a stylish CONTEMPORARY HOUSE, here's our pick of the latest *properties for sale by the sea* COMPILED BY *Alice Westgate*




**PROPERTY
of the MONTH**
**BRACKLESHAM BAY,
WEST SUSSEX**
£1,750,000

The shingle-and-sand beach lies right beside Concord, a detached, modern house that's perfect for bathing, fossil-hunting and surfing. See 1 overleaf...



1 BRACKLESHAM BAY, WEST SUSSEX £1,750,000

Previous page: It has heaps of eco features, five bedrooms, four reception rooms, three bathrooms and balconies galore. *Strutt & Parker* (01243 832600, struttandparker.com).

2 KINGSAND, CORNWALL £425,000

The ideal coastal pad that perches just above the beach. It has three bedrooms, a rear garden, and recently featured in a film about the life of British artist JMW Turner. *Marchand Petit* (01752 829000, marchandpetit.co.uk).

3 BOGNOR REGIS, WEST SUSSEX £325,000

Snap up this luxurious apartment in Esplanade Grande right on the seafront. It has a south-facing

sitting room, two double bedrooms and a balcony with views across the promenade. *Glyn-Jones* (01243 864400, glyn-jones.com).

4 SHANKLIN, ISLE OF WIGHT £525,000

Standing right on the cliff path, Holmcliff is a Victorian house with four bedrooms and a first-floor balcony that gives 180-degree views across Sandown Bay. *Wright Estate Agency* (01983 866822, wright-iv.co.uk).

5 CLEY-NEXT-THE-SEA, NORFOLK £399,000

It's easy to fall in love with The Retreat, a detached brick-and-flint cottage in this sought-after coastal village. Highlights include an open-plan kitchen, two bedrooms and a courtyard garden. *Bedfords* (01328 730500, bedfords.co.uk).

8
This four-bedroom house has views of the Fowey River Estuary from nearly every room

6 BRIGHTON, EAST SUSSEX £3,250,000

This grand double-fronted Regency house is in the middle of Kemp Town seafront and boasts six bedrooms, five reception rooms, a roof terrace, balcony, library, billiard room, two courtyards and four vaulted cellars. *Strutt & Parker* (01273 475411, struttandparker.com).

7 BEADNELL, NORTHUMBERLAND £245,000

No surprise why this charming two-bedroom stone cottage is called Bolthole – it's the perfect coastal hideaway in the heart of the village, and the sandy beach is just a couple of minutes' walk away. *Sanderson Young* (01665 600170, sandersonyoung.co.uk).



8 GOLANT, CORNWALL £475,000

Position is everything at Cornelva, a detached, four-bedroom house with views of the Fowey River Estuary from nearly every room. *Fowey Homes* (01726 833070, foweyhomesltd.co.uk).

9 EXMINSTER, DEVON £375,000

A former station house with four bedrooms, fully refurbished with a handmade kitchen with slate floors. Also has stunning views across the marshes to Topsham and Lympstone. *Wilkinson Grant* (01392 875000, wilkinsongrant.co.uk).

10 LOCH AWE, ARGYLL & BUTE £495,000

Your chance to acquire Tervine, an estate on the north-western shores of Loch Awe. Includes

127 acres of land, two cottages, three residential building plots and a mile of shoreline with fishing rights. *MacPhee & Partners* (01631 565251, macphee.co.uk).

11 NEWLYN, CORNWALL £775,000

Handsome Pembroke Lodge can be found just above the shore, not far from Penzance. There is a lovely period feel to its five bedrooms and three reception rooms, which have wonderful views over Mounts Bay. *Bradleys* (01736 360605, bradleys-estate-agents.co.uk).

12 PLYMOUTH, DEVON £675,000

Originally a captain's house, the Grade II-listed property has five bedrooms and great views across the Tamar Estuary. Best of all, you can rent a mooring close

SELL YOUR HOME THROUGH COAST

If you have a coastal home to sell and would like it to appear on these pages, email the details, plus a high-resolution image (300dpi) of the exterior, to enquiries@kelsey.co.uk. Cost is £50 for subscribers, £100 for non-subscribers. Make cheques payable to *coast* magazine (include subscription number if necessary) and send to Madeleine Barber at: *20 Homes to Buy... coast* magazine, Kelsey Media, Cudham Tithe Barn, Berry's Hill, Cudham, Kent TN16 3AG. We work three months in advance. Properties are chosen at the editor's discretion.

to the bottom of the garden. *Strutt & Parker* (01392 215631, struttandparker.com).

13 RYE, EAST SUSSEX £275,000

Set in a seaside conservation area, this two-bedroom, self-contained, Arts and Crafts-style maisonette with a roof terrace boasts distant views over the roofscape of the ancient town. *Phillips & Stubbs* (01797 227338, phillipsandstubbs.co.uk).

14 WALMER, KENT £795,000

The Clock House is a four-bedroom home converted from the former officers' mess in the Royal Marines Cavalry Barracks. It is close to the seafront and has been decorated in an



15



16



17



18



19



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eclectic style by its current owner, a well-known interior designer. *Bright & Bright* (01304 374071, brightandbright.co.uk).

15 LYNMOUTH, DEVON £275,000 – £450,000

Tors Park luxury apartments are carved out of a period building, ideal for holiday lets or permanent residence. Offering spacious accommodation, every property has a sea view, and terraces or gardens to enjoy the sunset. *Chartsedge* (01392 832446, chartsedge.co.uk).

16 HAYLE, CORNWALL £675,000

This state-of-the-art timber-clad chalet enjoys a peachy position at Gwithian Towans, a stone's throw from three miles of sandy beach and excellent surf. It has five

15 *Tors Park luxury apartments are carved out of a period building*

bedrooms, an outside shower and a decked area. *Miller & Son* (01736 754115, millerandson.com).

17 SALCOMBE, DEVON £1,695,000

The Beach House is a stylish coastal home above a small cove on Salcombe's popular waterfront. It has large windows and high ceilings and is decorated in New England-style, with three bedrooms, two terraces and a balcony. *Marchand Petit* (01548 844473, marchandpetit.co.uk).

18 ALDWICK BAY, WEST SUSSEX £950,000

Move to The Fairway and you'll find yourself close to a private beach on the exclusive Aldwick Bay Private Marine Estate. Also on offer are five bedrooms, a garden room and a swimming

pool. *Henry Adams* (01243 672721, henryadams.co.uk).

19 TORQUAY, DEVON £425,000

Set in a nicely converted 19th-century building, this apartment has two large terraces, two bedrooms and fabulous views over Tor Bay and the surrounding coastline. *John Couch* (01803 296500, johncouch.co.uk).

20 OLD FELIXSTOWE, SUFFOLK £430,000

Rose Cottage nestles next to the beach, with views across the sea and golf course. It has two bedrooms and a conservatory; outside is a separate studio with kitchen and shower room. *Bedfords* (01728 454505, bedfords.co.uk).

🏡 For coastal homes for sale, see coastmagazine.co.uk

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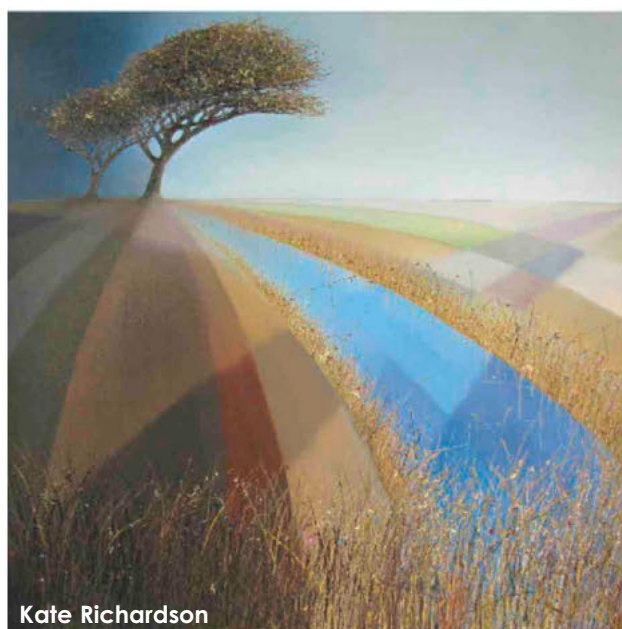


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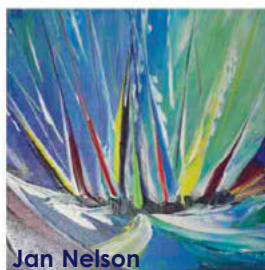
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WHAT YOU CAN GET FOR YOUR MONEY

Here are some of our favourite properties for sale



£1.5m

DREAM HOUSE

Aldeburgh Mill, built in 1824, was converted into this unusual beach house in the 1900s. It has three bedrooms, two towers and a vaulted living room – all in need of renovation. Savills (01473 234800, savills.co.uk).



£675,000

FAMILY HOUSE

Situated close to Aldeburgh High Street, this well-presented, three-bedroom property is offered with a sleek, contemporary décor and a pretty town garden. Bedfords (01728 454505, bedfords.co.uk).



£475,000

TOWN BOLTHOLE

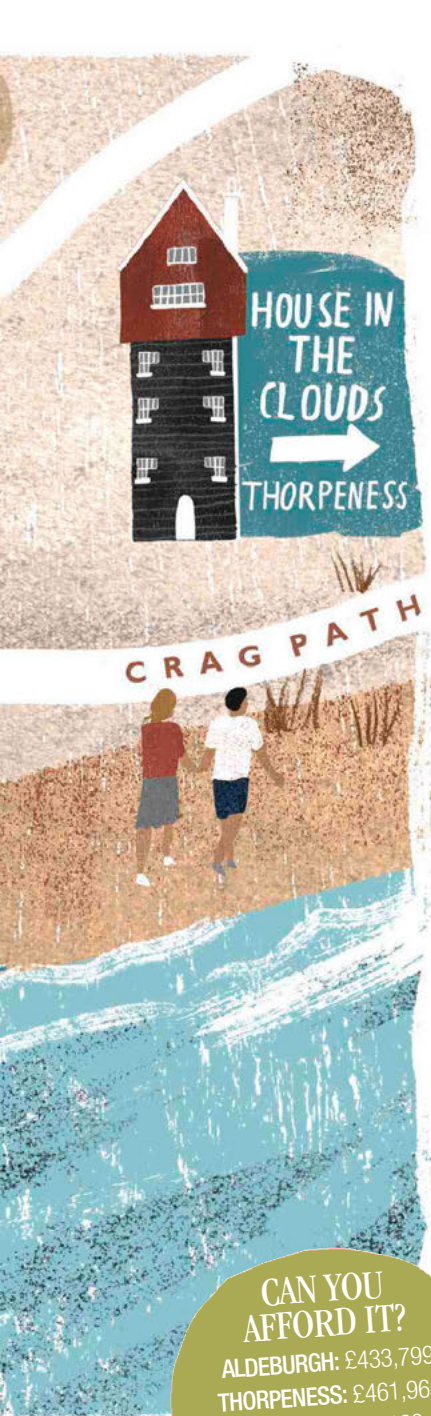
Featured in the BBC's hit comedy series *Grandpa in My Pocket*, this diddy one-bedroom cottage in central Aldeburgh has a courtyard garden and views of the sea. Jennie Jones (01728 454622, jennie-jones.com).



£425,000

MOCK TUDOR

One in a row of black-and-white mock-Tudor houses close to the beach at Thorpeness, this end-of-terrace cottage has three bedrooms and sea glimpses from the first floor. Best Estates (01728 452727, thebestestates.co.uk).



CAN YOU AFFORD IT?

ALDEBURGH: £433,799
 THORPENESS: £461,960
 SUFFOLK: £238,189
 UK: £266,976

AVERAGE HOUSE PRICES: [OCTOBER 2014].
 SOURCE: ZOOPLA (ZOOPLA.CO.UK).

Move to ... ALDEBURGH

It might be famous for its arts festival, but this *pretty town* on East Anglia's Amber Coast has more than just music to offer everyone who visits

WORDS **Lesley Gillilan** ILLUSTRATION **Tom Jay**

Aldeburgh is one of Suffolk's little gems: a crooked line of pastel-coloured houses on a beach pebbled with raw amber stones washed up from the North Sea. Clinker-built fishing boats rest on the shingle beside black-tarred shacks where fishermen sell lobster and fresh-caught Dover sole. On the seafront, the red herringbone brick of the 16th-century Moot Hall reminds us of the town's medieval roots. It's hard to think of a prettier place.

Between Southwold and Orford Ness, the setting is beguiling, too. Wildlife thrives on the marshy

wetlands of the Alde Estuary. Gentle meadows melt into woodland.

And, in nearby Thorpeness – a whimsical holiday village created in 1910 by landowner Glencairn Ogilvie – there are quaint, mock-Tudor houses, an artificial boating lake and the House in the Clouds (like a cottage on a stick, it was originally built as a water tower).

The area is best known as the heart of 'Benjamin Britten Country' and for the music festival he founded in the 1940s, but it was weekend walks on the beaches around Snape and Orford that inspired former civil servant Naomi Tarry's move from London to Suffolk. She and her husband Alex run Best of Suffolk (bestofsuffolk.co.uk), a holiday cottage company which they started after buying a bolthole in Aldeburgh. When they bought a second lettings property, they decided they should try it out. 'We planned to stay for a weekend, but ended up living there for two years!'

They are now settled permanently in Aldeburgh. 'I fell in love with the coastal scenery,' says Naomi. She also likes the pace of life and friendly people. 'Everyone seems to be in a relaxed mood, and although there are a lot of second homes, there is a big community of people who have lived here all their lives.'

BELOW Aldeburgh Beach is pebbled with raw amber stones washed up from the North Sea and lined with a jumble of pastel-coloured properties



PHOTOGRAPHS ALAMY

WHERE TO BUY

Aldeburgh's prime properties are among the colour-washed fishermen's cottages, converted boathouses and period houses in the High Street conservation area within three streets of the sea (Crabbe Street, Market Cross Place and Wentworth Road among others). Best for sea views is the shoreline Crag Path, almost touching the beach. Expect to pay around £400,000 for the smallest of cottages almost anywhere in town; more for larger houses (£675,000 for a three-bedroom detached property, close to the shops); good buys are those few, rare homes still in need of renovation. Best addresses in Thorpeness are the Tudor-style cottages in the dunes by the sea or houses overlooking The Meare.

TIME OUT

Aside from watersports, sailing, golf, and a long stretch of shingle

WHO'S WHO?

Composer **Benjamin Britten**, founder of the Aldeburgh Music & Arts Festival and Snape Maltings, moved to the area in 1942 and lived there until his death in 1976.

OPPOSITE, ABOVE Snape Maltings on the River Alde Quay. The houses pictured are on the Crag Path OPPOSITE, BELOW Walking along Aldeburgh Beach you'll come across Maggi Hambling's *Scallop* sculpture

beach that runs more or less continuously from Felixstowe to Lowestoft, Aldeburgh boasts a range of independent shops and galleries, a community-run cinema (aldeburghcinema.co.uk) – a quirky little picture house founded in 1919 – and the Concert Hall at nearby Snape Maltings (the multi-use conversion of a sprawling 19th-century maltings on the Alde Estuary). A year-long programme of music and literary events culminates with the Aldeburgh Festival in June (aldeburgh.co.uk). Good walks include the 12-mile Sailors' Path route to Snape, taking in wildlife habitats at

SCHOOLS

There is a good primary school in Aldeburgh, but older kids will need to travel to Seckford Foundation's Free School in Saxmundham (rated Good by Ofsted), or Thomas Mills High School, 14 miles away in Framlingham (rated Outstanding).

REALITY CHECK

House prices in this corner of Suffolk-on-Sea are almost twice the national average – hence budget-buyers might consider moving inland to Saxmundham, which is not only cheaper but also has a station

'With its coastal scenery, it's hard to think of a prettier place than Aldeburgh'



PAY A VISIT

The Brudenell

(01728 452071, brudenellhotel.co.uk).



Right on the seafront, a hop and a skip from the beach, this family-friendly hotel is a cheerful mix of Edwardian tradition and New England-style modern – with lots of light wood, marine-theme décor and jolly colours. As well as 44 rooms, many with king-size beds and sea views, the hotel has a relaxing beachfront terrace (great for watching the sun go down), a cosy fireside lounge (try the afternoon teas) and an award-winning restaurant that majors on fresh fish and seafood. From £115 a night.

Snape Marshes. Great places to eat include the Dolphin Inn at Thorpeness (thorpenessdolphin.com) and the Cragg Sisters Tea Room (craggsisters.co.uk) or The Lighthouse (lighthouserestaurant.co.uk) on Aldeburgh High Street.

JOBS & COMMUTING

Two-and-a-half hours north of London, via the A12, Aldeburgh is a little too far off the beaten track for a daily commute to the city. The closest station is at Saxmundham, where you can travel to London's Liverpool Street via Woodbridge. Some travel to jobs in Ipswich (the 25-mile journey takes 45 minutes by car) but many choose to stay close to Aldeburgh, setting up local businesses or working from home. The nearest international airport is Norwich.

and schools. Prices in Thorpeness (the highest in the area) seem unaffected by the close proximity to Sizewell's two nuclear power stations. Sizewell A, five miles north of Aldeburgh, was decommissioned in 2006, but its twin is still active.

COMING UP

New-build developments are rare in this conservative region of the Suffolk Heritage Coast, but in once old-fashioned Thorpeness, the newly constructed Barn Hall offers loft-style holiday studios and, on the beach, the extraordinarily modern Dune House – the Norwegian import created for the holiday home rental company Living Architecture – looks like a spaceship that has landed in fairyland.




What Naomi likes about... ALDEBURGH



📍 **ALDEBURGH FISH AND CHIP SHOP** (aldeburghfishandchips.co.uk) for fresh local fish and homemade chips – and one of the best chippies in Britain. 'In the summer, you get queues right round the block, but it's the thing to do here: a pint of Adnams in the **WHITE HART INN** next door (01728 453205) and then fish and chips on the beach. People bring their own plates, cutlery and bottles of wine – it's very civilised.'

📍 The **BEACH WALK FROM ALDEBURGH TO THORPENESS** and back again – about half an hour each way. 'A highlight is Maggi Hambling's *Scallop* sculpture standing alone on the shingle – a beautiful tribute to the life and work of Benjamin Britten.'

📍 Aldeburgh's **THE RED HOUSE** – home to Benjamin Britten and Peter Pears from the 1950s until their deaths – is perfect for a rainy day (brittenpears.org). 'This lovely little museum, is brilliant, free, and gives a fascinating insight into the lives of these two musicians.'



10 best... DIGITAL DETOX DESTINATIONS

Learn how to switch off and reconnect with the natural world on a coastal break without Wi-Fi or even electricity

WORDS *Alex Reece*

For YOUR OWN PRIVATE ISLAND

1 Fort Clonque, Alderney, Channel Islands

There are no TVs, telephones or Wi-Fi in any of the 194 properties owned by The Landmark Trust, and Fort Clonque, built on a rocky outcrop off the Channel Island of Alderney, is no exception. Founded in 1847 to fend off the French, it was designed to accommodate a battery of 10 guns, two officers and 50 men – however, owing to advances in naval capability, it was soon disarmed after completion. Delightfully, at high tide, the whole fort is cut off from the rest of the island, so there's nothing to do but admire the elements at play and to practise the lost art of conversation. From Fort Clonque, Alderney and its Zig-Zag coastal path can be reached on foot via a causeway at low tide. *From £1,038 a week, sleeps 13 (01628 825925, landmarktrust.org.uk).*

For A SHEPHERD'S DELIGHT

2 Cwt Crannog, Nr Llangrannog, Ceredigion

Open since summer 2014, these two custom-made farmworkers' huts have views down the Hoffnant Valley to the sea from their own private meadow. Both the bed hut and 'facilities' hut, which includes the kitchen and bathroom, have mains electricity, but there is no Wi-Fi or phone signal, enabling guests to enjoy the peaceful setting. Based on a five-acre smallholding, you can order a home-baked breakfast basket with organic eggs, or a first-night evening meal, from the farmer's wife. If you can tear yourself away from the vintage-style set-up, the seaside village of Llangrannog is a three-minute drive. *From £320 a week, sleeps four (0844 500 5101, underthethatch.co.uk).*



For A NATURAL HIGH

3 7th Rise, Roseland Peninsula, Cornwall

During the introduction for the outdoor courses run by 7th Rise, deep in the woodland of the Fal Estuary, all watches and phones are confiscated. 'It's



about immersing yourself fully in the environment and letting go of everything you think you need to live,' explains team member Alice Manhire. Founded two years ago by wild food expert Thom Hunt, 7th Rise is based at 'Lost Cottage' – a former charcoal cottage, whose location remains a secret – where guests can also sleep. The Weekender course focuses on foraging, wild food cooking, butchery, canoeing and shooting. The aim is to get participants to reconnect with nature and learn lost survival skills. *From £249pp, including food and accommodation (07763 256107, 7thrise.co.uk).*

For TAKING A TRIP BACK IN TIME

4 Penrhyn, Strumble Head, Pembrokeshire

Part of the appeal of staying at this remote, clifftop cottage is the experience of living in a bygone age. Without electricity, lighting is provided by oil lamps and candles, and there are books, games and a piano to help you make your own old-school entertainment. The interior is authentically furnished: slate floors and whitewashed walls are cosied up by Welsh blankets and an oil-fired Rayburn. Step out of the garden gate and you'll join the Pembrokeshire Coast Path, for walks through craggy countryside to the nearby village of Fishguard – or, in the other direction, Porthgain for the best local seafood. *From £453 a week, sleeps six (01437 765765, coastalcottages.co.uk).*



For A SEASIDE LOVE SHACK

5 The Beach Hut, Noss Mayo, Devon

What could be more romantic than staying on a secluded cove, with no chirruping smartphones or email alerts to disturb your time together? The Beach Hut in South Devon is one such haven, free from Wi-Fi, phone signal or even power. Access is on foot by a cliff path and, besides the hut – originally a boathouse, dating back more than a century – there's nothing there: just the cliffs, beach and sea. Accommodation is rustic yet comfortable: there is running water, a gas-fired oven, solar-powered lighting and a wood-fired outdoor shower and hot tub. Food hampers and organic barbecue food boxes are available to pre-order from Carswell Farm, where the hut is based. *From £550 for two nights, sleeps two, open March-October, but not during school holidays (01752 830020, carswellcottages.com).*



For GLORIOUS ISOLATION

6 Tigh Nighean Bhan, Trotternish Peninsula, Isle of Skye

The lack of Wi-Fi and mobile reception at this remote hideaway for two is in keeping with the traditional setting of a thatched blackhouse on Skye's wild Trotternish Peninsula. Tigh Nighean Bhan (or 'house of the fair lady') was originally built by the church as a reading house, and was restored in recent years by architects Rural Design to include a smart bathroom and open-plan living/kitchen area. The cottage has views towards the Western Isles of Harris and Lewis (there are sailings from the nearby port of Uig) and is close to rugged walking country and the Old Man of Storr. *From £540 a week, sleeps two (01463 719219, wildernesscottages.co.uk).*



For RECHARGING BODY AND MIND

7 Ayurveda and Yoga Retreat, Neal's Yard Holidays, Gower Peninsula

According to Neal's Yard Holidays MD Ulrike Spire, the only complaint they ever hear from guests on this retreat is that they don't want it to end. 'The treatments and nature can be so nurturing,' she says. The accommodation is surrounded by ancient woodland on a rural farmstead, and the package includes Ayurvedic treatments and yoga sessions, plus all meals. *From £495 midweek; £190 per night over a weekend, three-night minimum stay (020 7617 7171, nealsyardholidays.com).*

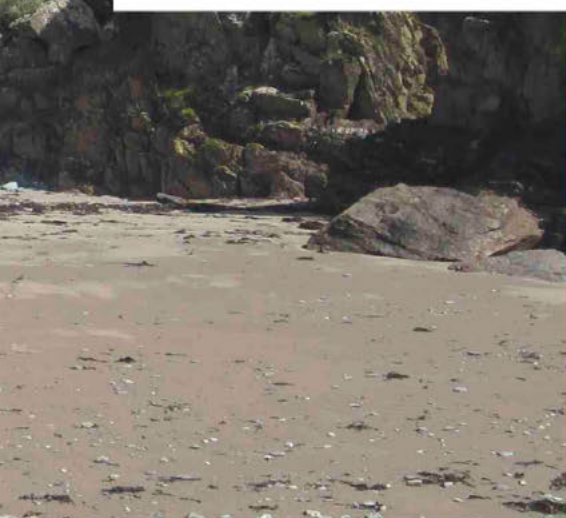




For FAMILY FUN

8 Lochhouses Farm, Tynninghame, East Lothian

Surely more exciting for kids than any electronic gadget are the newly opened treehouses at Lochhouses Farm, sited between Dunbar and North Berwick on the east coast of Scotland. Rather like play forts for glamping, the five purpose-built timber structures stand on two-metre-high stilts, offering thrilling views of the sea and the Bass Rock from the deck – and no Wi-Fi. With no electricity either (except in the hot shower), cooking is done on a log-burning stove and lanterns are provided, as is a cool box for food storage. Swings hang below deck for children to play on – and with farm animals on site to feed, plus Tynninghame Beach next door, there's little chance of them getting bored. *From £825 a week, sleeps five (01172 047830, canopyandstars.co.uk).*



For A TECH-FREE CITY BREAK

9 The Westin Dublin, Ireland

Since 2012, the five-star Westin Dublin, overlooking Trinity College, has offered a Digital Detox package to help further people's enjoyment of the port city. On arriving at the hotel, guests can surrender their devices, or keep them in a safe in their room. Tech-free diversions take the form of breakfast in bed and an in-room massage. A 'detox kit' is also provided, including info on Dublin and a walking map, to lure you out into the real world. Along with cultural attractions, such as the Book of Kells, Dublin has a

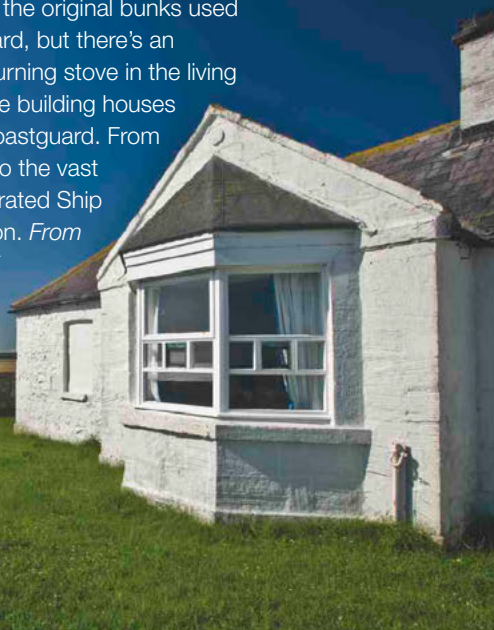
number of sandy beaches close by, such as Claremont. Just take the bus from the city centre. *From €175pp, based on two sharing; single supplement applies (00 353 1 645 1129, thewestindublin.com).*



For PANORAMIC VIEWS

10 Lookout Cottage, Low Newton-by-the-Sea, Northumberland

If you don't mind the fact that the (heated) loo is outside, this hilltop former coastguard's cottage offers the chance to escape modern life entirely with no TV, no Wi-Fi and 360-degree views of the Northumberland coastline. The recently refurbished interior has the original bunks used by coastguards (smaller than standard, but there's an additional double bed), plus a log-burning stove in the living area. Meanwhile, the other half of the building houses radio equipment still used by HM Coastguard. From the property, it's a five-minute walk to the vast sands of Embleton Bay or the celebrated Ship Inn and microbrewery at Low Newton. *From £385 a week, sleeps four (0344 335 1287, nationaltrustcottages.co.uk).*



WHY DETOX?

Clinical psychologist Linda Blair, author of *The Key to Calm* (Hodder, £14.99), outlines the benefits of a gadget-free break...

'Going on a digital detox helps because it settles the brain back down to responding to the rhythm of natural light and day and not to be on alert all the time and flooded with (the stress hormone) cortisol. The light that lights up our screens suppresses melatonin, which is what needs to rise for us to be relaxed and go to sleep. So, when you go home after your detox, you need to be the master of your devices. Turn off the sound that lets you know a message has come in and make a plan each evening about when to check your emails. Then you'll be more rested.'

CREATURES of the DEEP

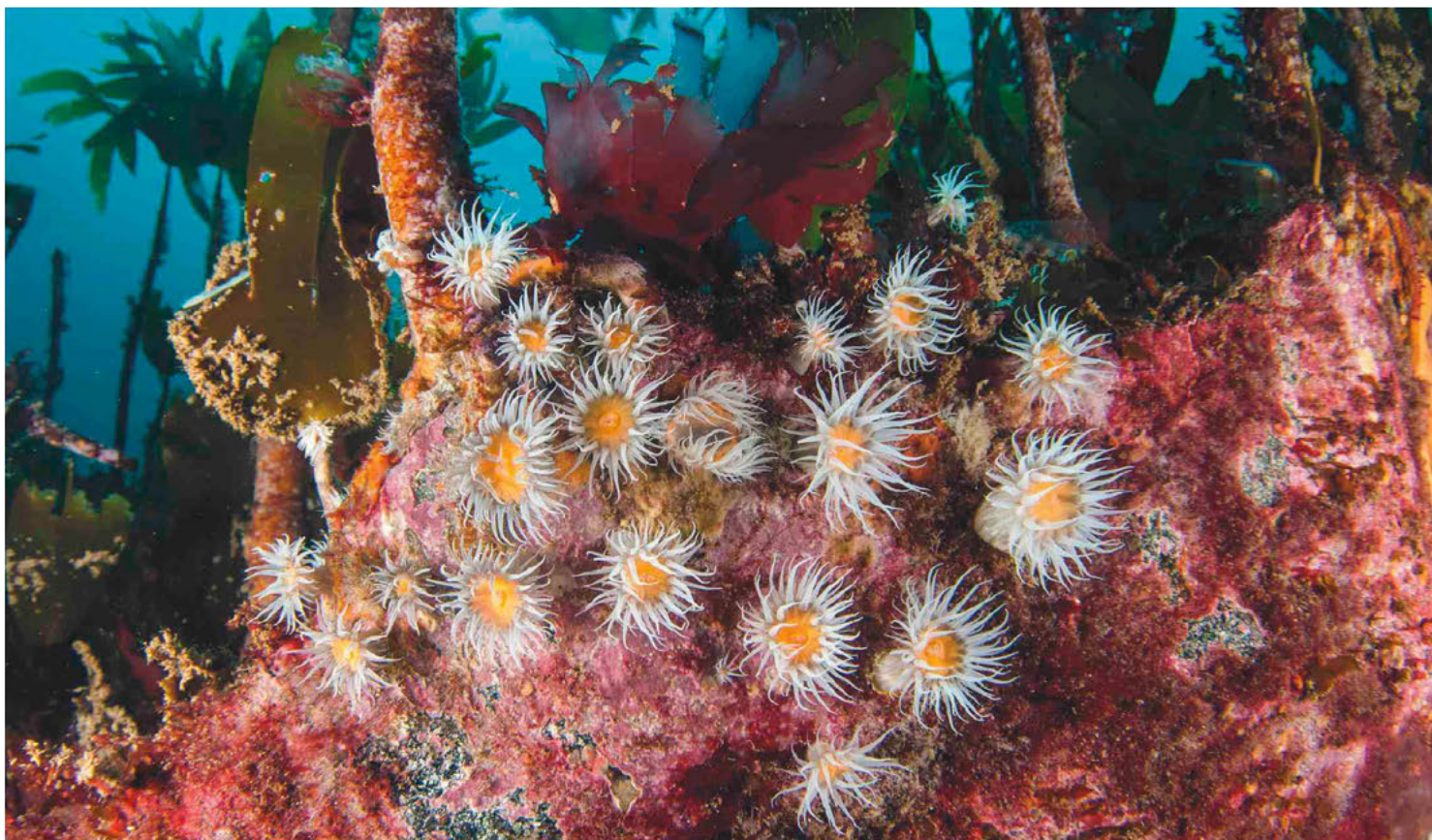
These amazing shots of animals in their natural habitats showcase some of the best Coast and Marine photographs taken from a new book that accompanies the *British Wildlife Photography Awards 2014*

THE CAVE (MAUVE STINGER,
PELAGIA NOCTILUCA)
Sula Sgeir, Scotland

PHOTOGRAPHER: RICHARD SHUCKSMITH,
HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Exploring the cave of Sula Sgeir, a remote rock in the northwest Atlantic, I came across this jellyfish that had been pushed in by the tide. The beautiful jellyfish, clear Atlantic water and the dramatic sea cave made for an exciting dive. Sula Sgeir is home to 20,000 nesting gannets and plays host to the Guga hunters, men from Lewis who harvest the young gannets to eat every summer.'





UNDERWATER GARDEN
(WHITE STRIPED ANEMONE,
ACTINOTHEO SPHYRODETA)
North Rona, Scotland

PHOTOGRAPHER: RICHARD SHUCKSMITH

'This rocky habitat is full of surprises, with kelp growing on the top of the rocks and the vertical rock faces full of invertebrates. This scene just looks wonderful to me, with the rock covered in red encrusting algae, the anemones and the kelp above. It really shows off how wonderful the seas are around the UK.'

SHANNY TRIO (SHANNY,
LIPOPHRYS PHOLIS)
Criccieth, Gwynedd, North Wales

PHOTOGRAPHER: MARK N THOMAS

'These inquisitive little fish can be found hiding in the nooks and crannies on the breakwater off Criccieth Beach. They often come out to investigate a strange underwater intruder and last summer, I was able to get this photo of three individuals peering out at me at the same time.'

GANNET BUBBLES (NORTHERN GANNET, *MORUS BASSANUS*)
Shetland Isles, Scotland

PHOTOGRAPHER: RICHARD SHUCKSMITH, HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Fast and furious, the gannets dive, and as one dives it's a cue for other birds to dive; sometimes 10, 20 or 30 birds can be diving at once. It's crazy, as the area where the birds

dive turns to bubbles. They show amazing awareness and never hit one another. Trying to capture a split-level shot of a diving gannet with gannets flying above proved challenging. There was a little bit of guesswork as I found it easier not to look through the viewfinder and watch the scene before me but aim to fire the shutter as the gannet hit the water.'



A BRITTLE BED (COMMON BRITTLESTAR, *OPHIOTHRIX FRAGILIS*)
Tolsta Head, Lewis, Outer Hebrides, Scotland

PHOTOGRAPHER: JANE MORGAN, HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Tolsta Head is the first promontory south of the Butt of Lewis. The bay to the north was the site of top-secret biological warfare experiments in the early 1950s. This involved the release of toxic agents such as bubonic plague. Despite its history, this is without doubt one of the prettiest reefs I have ever dived. The rocks and boulders were hidden beneath a carpet of brittlestars. The common brittlestar forms dense aggregations offshore, with as many as 2,000 individuals recorded per square metre.'

EDGE OF THE WORLD JELLYFISH (COMPASS JELLYFISH, *CHRYSAORA HYSOSCELLA*)
South Harris, Scotland

PHOTOGRAPHER: CYRIL CHEVILLOT, HIGHLY COMMENDED

'When I first arrived on this South Harris beach, I got the feeling I could reach the edge of the world: impressive light, a dark blue sky and fantastic green water. When I came into the sea, I was lucky enough to come across this jellyfish in two minutes. I swam along with it for quite a long time before I realised it was the unique jellyfish of the area.'



SUNSTAR AND KELP (COMMON
SUNSTAR, *CROSASTER PAPPUSUS*)
Loch Carron, Wester Ross, Scotland

PHOTOGRAPHER: TREVOR REES

'A close-focusing wide-angle lens was used to capture the sunstar against a backdrop of reef and kelp. A slow shutter speed was used to maximise the available background light and artificial strobe light was added to bring out the red colour of the sunstar.'



GREY SEAL IN A SANDSTORM (GREY SEAL, *HALICHOERUS GRYPUS*)
North Norfolk, England

PHOTOGRAPHER: JAMIE HALL,
HIGHLY COMMENDED

'This seal pup was trying to take shelter behind a rusty groyne during a cold and very windy January afternoon. The wind kept changing direction and at times it was exposed to the sand that was being blown all over the beach. There is no escaping the elements for young seals as they can't retreat into the water until their fur is 100 per cent waterproof.'





SAFETY IN A SNAKELOCKS
ANEMONE (BLUE SHRIMP,
PERICLIMENES SAGITTIFER)
Babbacombe Beach,
Devon, England

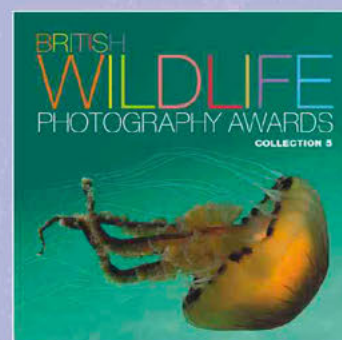
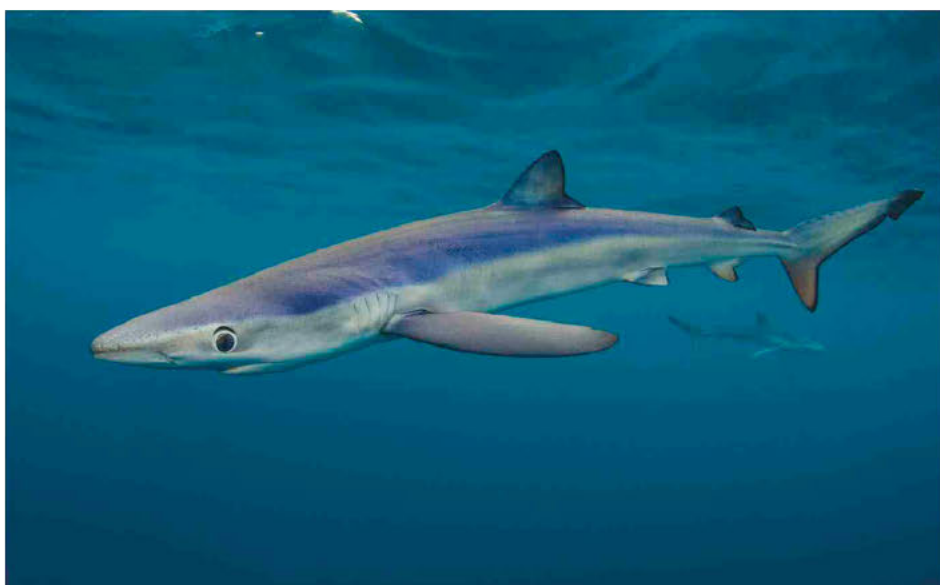
PHOTOGRAPHER: TREVOR REES,
HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Blue shrimp have made a relatively recent appearance in Britain, possibly as a result of warming seas. At present they are only seen at a number of sites on the south coast of Britain. This one was photographed in the shallows of Babbacombe Beach. The biggest challenge, apart from finding one, was to get a pleasing composition of the shrimp with its host anemone.'

BIG BLUES (BLUE SHARK,
PRIONACE GLAUCA)
Penzance, Cornwall, England

PHOTOGRAPHER: ALEXANDER MUSTARD,
COAST AND MARINE CATEGORY WINNER

'Blue sharks are something I thought I'd never encounter in Britain, as they are rare visitors to our shores. I was amazed to see one shark, so when a second arrived I was keen to capture a frame with a pair of sharks cruising beneath the surface.'



READER OFFER

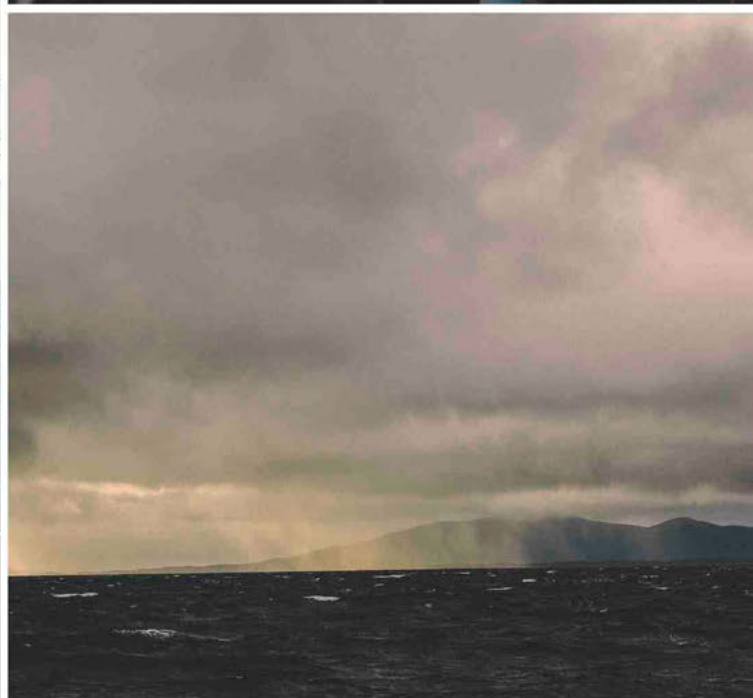
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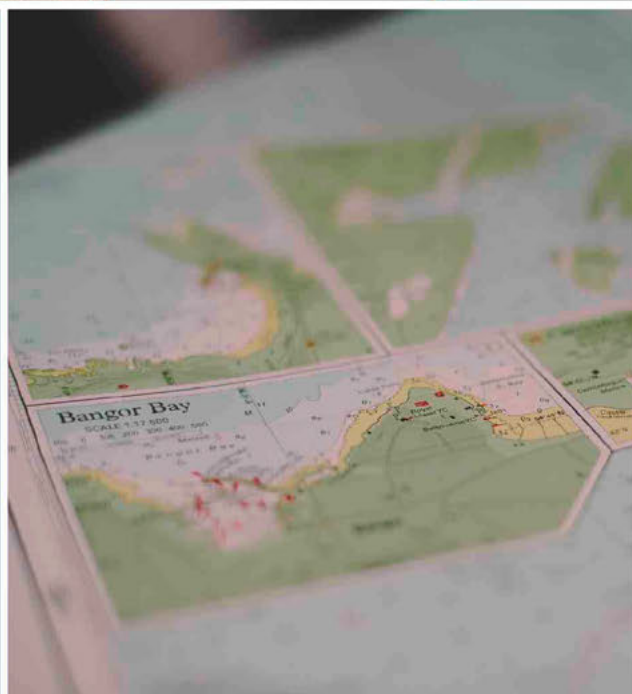
In search of fresh adventure, an intrepid band of *surfers* brave a tough stretch of water to find *the perfect wave*

WORDS **Barry Mottershead** PHOTOGRAPHS **Christian McLeod**





CLOCKWISE, FROM FAR LEFT The surfers set out from Bangor on the west coast of Ireland on *Blue Fox*, a yacht designed for coastal cruising; below deck, surrounded by stacks of their equipment – including food, backpacks and surfboards in their ‘coffin bags’ – the crew keep a close eye on charts and maps (right); part of the route to the Outer Hebrides is so tidal it has previously been classified as unnavigable



Bangor, 9am, and we're loading our gear aboard our yacht *Blue Fox*, the human chain passing backpacks, boxes of food, laptops and surfboards on to the deck and then stashing them down below. Orders are to secure them well, as we're expecting rough seas and a passage of 30 hours at least to reach the Outer Hebrides. We have to slip lines within the next hour to make it through a stretch of water so tidal that it has formerly been classified as unnavigable by the Navy. A dangerous bottleneck of currents combine with unusual underwater topography to produce whirlpools and standing waves up to 30ft high; the roar of this thunderous water can be heard from miles away over the desolate heathland. To make matters even more interesting, we're attempting this passage on some of the biggest spring tides of the year.

The crew is a ragtag bunch of wave riders who live on the west coast of Ireland – the common thread among us being a love for the frontier. To live on the edge of an island in the North Atlantic has a certain feel, a disconnect if you will, that some of us have been born into, and others have travelled the world searching for its embrace. It's a place that you either love or hate; people come and people go but only a few stay and see the rugged landscape and warm culture as home.

MOTLEY CREW

Skipper Dave Quinn has spent his life at sea aboard *Blue Fox*, battling storms in the Bay of Biscay and doing yacht deliveries to earn a living. Lessons learned the hard way have kept him sharp yet calm, and he is the perfect guy to be piloting us to the Isle of Lewis.

Shane and Stevo are both west coast locals and good friends. Having grown up competing in the Irish surfing scene and reached top level, they were looking for another challenge, so they jumped at the chance to explore a different coastline with new surfing opportunities.

Pete and Christian ditched their studies and work commitments ➡➡➡

to document the journey to these islands, a new challenge and extreme conditions swaying them from normality.

Paul and I, who have been tackling big waves in Ireland for the past 10 years, make up the tail end. Both of us are from warmer climes – Australia and South Africa respectively – and have fallen in love with this part of the world, swapping past lives down south for colder, less conventional ones up here.

HEADING OUT

Lines are slipped and we're away. The breeze is fair and we make good progress until nightfall, when Dave assigns us watch duties and we prepare for our first night of working shifts at the helm. It's been a race to get to the bottleneck with favourable tides, and when I stumble aboard at 3am for my watch, I see land either side of us, cliffs towering up into the blackness. It's a scene more akin to the Grand Canyon than this part of the world.

The next thing I notice is our speed: we are going nearly twice as fast as we were during the day. *Blue Fox* is being rocketed by the full force of the Atlantic, like a leaf in a gutter. Dave is at the helm, and has been for the past six hours, peering at the charts every now and then to make sure we are lined up correctly to navigate through the channel in between two land masses. I stare in disbelief at a whirlpool half the size of a rugby pitch appearing out of the noisy gloom up ahead and Dave expertly sidesteps it, letting it pass down to starboard, waist-high foam orbiting around its deadly black centre.

Just before sunrise, we are spat out of the tidal race into a stretch of ocean separating the Outer and Inner Hebrides. Over breakfast, Dave and I discuss the similarities of riding big waves and open ocean sailing, each requiring the participant to remain calm under pressure, to call upon past experiences, to trust your senses and use what you have and not regret what you have not.

All that day and halfway through the night we continue on our quest to reach



Stornoway. Our arrival is heralded by a blustery north wind born in the Arctic and carrying with it the cold sting of rain. We tie up to a commercial pier, surrounded by fishing vessels dimly lit by yellow streetlamps, and the elation of getting here is soon overtaken by sheer exhaustion. After a quiet pint in the harbour bar, we sleep soundly.

VIKING INVADERS

The Isle of Lewis was claimed as early as the 8th century by Viking marauders, who ventured here looking for rumoured jewelled chalices, golden crucifixes and precious manuscripts. They ultimately claimed farmland and set up trading routes via the sea. Although known as strong seafaring folk, they struggled to navigate the treacherous waters off the isles and ended up having to



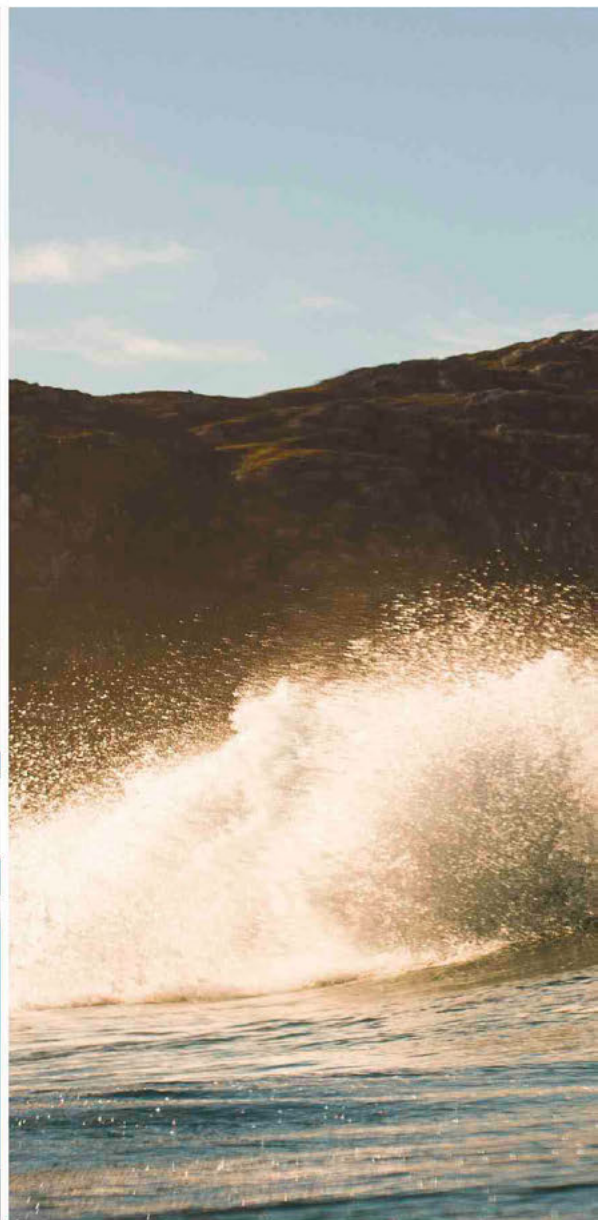


'THE ISLE OF LEWIS WAS CLAIMED AS EARLY AS THE 8TH CENTURY BY VIKING MARAUDERS LOOKING FOR JEWELLED CHALICES'



ABOVE AND ABOVE RIGHT **Keeping a look-out for possible surfing sites from the deck, before being despatched to the shore for a closer look on foot** RIGHT **No adrenaline-inducing waves here, but it's the perfect spot for a refreshing dip** LEFT **Heading for harbour as the sun goes down**





CLOCKWISE, FROM ABOVE The boys catch some early morning rays; searching for the perfect beach pays off, as we find some great waves to ride; with miles of coastline to explore, the Outer Hebrides offer exciting possibilities for surfers; shucking the batch of scallops we bought from a trawler tied up next to us in the harbour; enjoying a pint in the local pub is fair reward after a hard day of surfing





'HIDDEN FROM THE GALE BY A SMALL HEADLAND,
WE ENJOY FUN PEAKS BREAKING IN AZURE WATER'



rely on locals to show them safe passages between the islands.

We awake to a big ocean swell and relentless northerlies, and search out a secluded beach break – an area where waves break on a sandy seabed. Hidden from the gale by a small headland, we enjoy fun peaks breaking in azure water. Watching rainbows come and go, we gorge ourselves until the tide kills it.

This far north, the birdlife is thriving after a long summer and we watch gannets and barnacle geese getting ready for their migration south while we pull on our wetsuits at another beach break flanked by a beautiful old harbour on one side and a line of storm-eroded cliffs on the other.

STORMY WEATHER

The wind doesn't want to let up and the following morning we awake to another day of gales. We're thankful that we're not at sea, as the very high frequency (VHF) radio crackles a warning to any vessels in the area to stay ashore. We heed the advice and decide to hike a section of coast that has no road access. A few of the headlands show potential for surf, so we put on warm clothes and boots and set out along the peat bogs and low-lying scrub.

Stumbling through ravines and jumping over tea-coloured streams for most of the day, we come across a point break, where underwater rocks create waves.

Dave, Paul and I paddle out. The low tide has exposed a few rocks that I enjoy trying to navigate around and through on the surfboard. Afterwards, we decide to leave early in the morning for an area of bays and islands further north, which look more promising.

We arrive back at the yacht just in time to buy a hefty bag of fresh scallops from a trawler tied up next to us. We spend the next hour shucking them by torchlight on the deck of *Blue Fox*. Then Shane, who is a chef, manages to whip up a scallop feast using some of the ingredients we had onboard, including black pudding and balsamic glaze.

The following day, I wake up to the sound of the rigging creaking



and realise that we're on our way. Everyone is above deck and we're sailing further north, into the unknown. A couple of hours later we pull into a cove, where high cliffs on either side create an amazing wedge-shaped wave and the boys hit the waves. We are the only surfers for miles, and we play uninterrupted in the sea until our arms cannot take another paddle out.

RUNNING THE COASTLINE

Hunting around these islands by yacht is not as easy as I had imagined. We sail along surveying the coastline from the back, occasionally seeing waves break and bounce, but it's difficult to tell what size they are so the decision is made for me to go ashore and run the coastline, while the boys follow in the yacht. Paul drops me off on a likely stretch of coast and, armed with two litres of water, a VHF radio and some fruit cake, I start my run.

It's tough terrain and I find myself having to scale cliffs, jump ravines and circumnavigate lakes, all the time keeping a beady eye on the ocean. *Blue Fox* is making better progress than me, and soon she is a dot on the horizon. Strangely, I feel happy to be ashore and alone in the wilderness, running along stretches of sandy beach and over rocky headlands, the odd fence and old farmhouse the only signs of life.

After a few hours, come across a man and two dogs near a lake, and he offers me a lift further south, towards the arranged pick-up point. On the drive in his rusty Land Rover, Erik tells me how he was born in the area, and after attending school here as a child was sent to boarding school on the mainland. One day when he was in his mid-thirties and working a solid job in the city, he realised he was 'living someone else's dream' and packed it all in to return to the island and his roots.

We pull up to his original family home for a coffee, and he tells me how he is one of the only surfers on the island. His favourite wave is just in front of the house – sadly, it lies dormant as I gaze out of the window, but the magnitude



of this setup is apparent, with a huge sand bar running into a deep bay. He tells me of an American surfer who stayed for a winter a few years ago and rode it alone while Erik watched from the warmth of his lounge. The American vowed to return and stay for good, but was never seen again. Erik has now grown used to riding the place solo, with only seals and birds for company.

The Land Rover rumbles to a halt on a wind-blown headland and we part with a handshake and a promise that I will return. I watch him drive off down a dirt track and back to his chosen life, and cannot help but feel jealous.

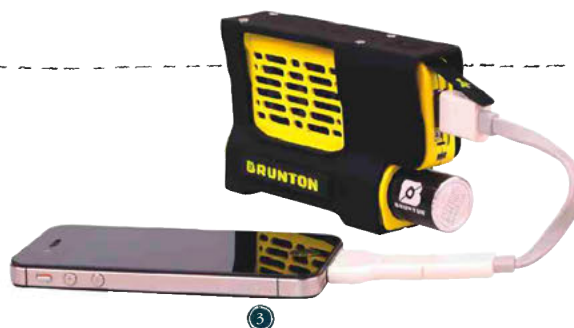
I fire up the VHF: 'Copy Blue Fox, this is Barry. I'm ready to leave, but we have to come back.'



🌐 Go to coastmagazine.co.uk to find more stories from around the UK coastline. Share your views with us on twitter [@coastmag](https://twitter.com/coastmag) and facebook.com/coastmagazine



CLOCKWISE, FROM ABOVE Wetsuits are hung out to dry on the yacht after a successful day of surfing; Barry has to negotiate tough terrain along the coast when he goes looking for other areas to surf; riding the waves – this is what it's all about; the Isle of Lewis coastline



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TRY IT NOW

FREEDIVING

Susie Moss headed to *Cornwall's north coast* to learn how to dive underwater without the aid of any breathing equipment





Sea nomads have been freediving for food since mankind first evolved. Some traditional diving cultures still exist, mostly in South East Asia, but with the increase of commercial fishing and other pressures of modern society, this ancient way of life and of harvesting from the water is being rapidly eroded. A new culture of freediving and foraging in the West has emerged, harnessing these time-honoured skills in an equally respectful way.

Balanced between sport and meditation freediving – the art of breath hold diving – challenges us both mentally and physically. Once the technique is learned, it's a wonderfully simple sport and a great way to interact with the seas – without much equipment and with very low impact to the environment. The British coast, despite – or because of – its cold water temperatures, produces a tough breed of enthusiastic free divers. In the spring, when the storms have died off, our waters can be clear and full of life. The plankton bloom in late May can make the water a bit murky, but it brings the basking sharks in, and then as summer approaches, the visibility is good again and there is an abundance of fish to be among. Susie Moss joined Freedive UK on Cornwall's north coast for a weekend of training and underwater enlightenment.



HAVING A GO
Susie Moss
joined a group
of five people
on a weekend
freediving course
in Newquay

9.30AM WHY WE'RE HERE

Five of us gather in the morning sun to meet our freediving instructor and founder of Freedive UK, Ian Donald. We sit on the grassy headland, introduce ourselves and tell each other what's brought us here. Absence of gear, freedom, a move forward from snorkelling and the meditational aspect of breath control are all raised as appealing reasons.

'Freediving is about as far away from scuba diving as football,' says Ian. 'You will be moving in such a way that you feel more in touch with your surroundings, and you'll find marine life behaving differently around you.'

Like any sport, freediving involves learning the techniques, training, confidence and practise. He talks us through the different freediving disciplines and what we will cover to reach our target of AIDA two-star qualification.

10AM BREATHE SLOWLY

We begin by focusing on our breathing, finding ways to become aware of our breath in a calm and controlled manner, and, most importantly, to avoid hyperventilating. I find myself nervous, wondering if being an asthmatic will hinder my ability, and I regret the extra coffee at breakfast – surely I'll struggle to lower my already thumping heart rate. He assures me it'll be fine, and it seems we're all nervous about something. We learn how

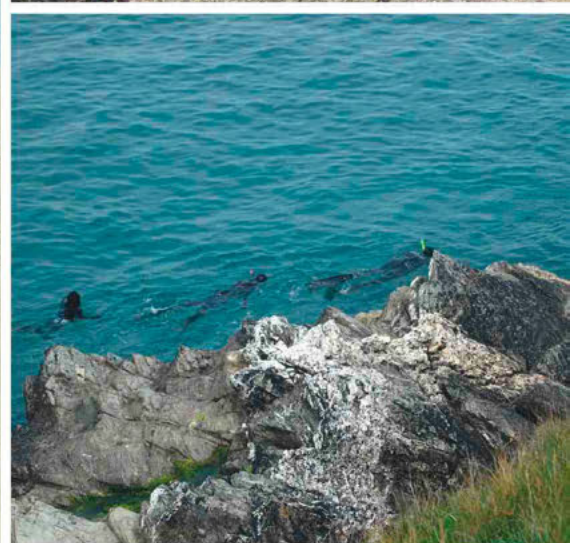
ASK the PRO



Ian Donald, Master instructor at Freedive UK, gives his advice on getting started if you're scared of deep water.

'It's not going to be an easy journey, but you'll never regret it once you reach the end. The first step is down to you. Buy a mask and a snorkel, go to a sheltered beach, walk into the water and get used to breathing through a snorkel while looking at the underwater world around you. Even a deep rockpool will do. The next step is swimming with a mask and snorkel. Start without fins and just use breaststroke in still and safe water. This can be a swimming pool but better if it was the sea. Once you're confident with this stage, it's time to enrol on a freediving course, such as Freedive's UK Recreational Freediver, for a relaxed intro, no pressure and loads of fun.'

PHOTOGRAPHS KIAN CLIPSON



to achieve a slow resting heart rate; hands on our stomachs, we practise calm inhalation and extended exhalation. This is called the breathe up and helps to lower our heart rate, before the final big breaths; first inhaling to about 75 per cent capacity, then exhaling as much as possible, and then inhale to 100 per cent. We all practise sucking in air and filling our stomach, chest and lung cavities.

11AM POOL PRACTISE

To practise our breath hold in an easy and controlled place, we head to a private pool a short drive away. First we must 'lube up' the suits that Ian provides in order to squeeze into them. I'm used to regular wetsuits being an ungainly struggle but these are something

ABOVE Susie and her course mates head down to the sea carrying their flippers ABOVE, TOP RIGHT Instructor Ian wore a different coloured wetsuit so his students could easily identify him when they were in the water

else. Luckily, Ian has the technique of dowsing the suits with conditioner helps to slide them on. In the water, we practise our relaxation and our breathe up before embarking on increasing our breath hold. It feels bizarre, lying face down in a pool for as long as you can manage. We work in pairs, supporting each other and guiding the floating bodies where needed. After some practise, we get to the test time: we must each achieve at least two minutes static apnea (holding breath) to qualify. We're encouraged to urge each other on to reach our target, but also told how to help our partners to the edge and get them out of the water if needed. I watch coast photographer Kian puffing up,

rising in the water and then holding his breathe for an impressive three and a half minutes. Then it's my turn, and I feel ridiculously tense at the thought of it. I lie face down for what feels like an eternity, floating in liquid space, conscious of the bubbles in my ears and the water trickling into my mask, all the while trying to quieten my screaming mind. I am amazed when I reach two minutes and 20 seconds.

Next, it's weights and fins on for the dynamic apnea test – moving underwater for at least 40m on one breath hold. The fins are huge, longer than regular ones for extra effectiveness in the water and greater hilarity on the surface. We learn how to swim keeping our legs straight, bending at the knee as little as possible for



maximum glide. I find the breath hold easier when moving, less mind control perhaps, and more to keep me distracted from the bursting chest sensation.

1.30PM LUNCH & LEARNING

We return to Towan Headland for our pasta-packed lunch. We learn more theory while our food goes down before we can get into the water again. This time we discuss pressure and equalising. As divers, we need to equalise our ears, our sinuses and our mask. Ian runs through some of the nasty sounding consequences of not equalising and we all realise how important this technique will be to us. We learn the Frenzel technique – pinching our nose closed, placing our tongue on the roof

ABOVE, LEFT The group learned how to breathe through a snorkel while looking at the underwater world around them ABOVE Susie got her hands on a starfish ABOVE, RIGHT Two buoys in the water marked out the depths the free divers had to reach



of our month and gently moving it upwards until the pressure in the middle ear is equal – most commonly used by free divers for depths of up to 40m. We're also taught to duck dive – a smooth and rapid way to enter the water head down and gain depth fast. Soon it's our time to try it out.

3.15PM INTO THE SEA

We're lucky to have a sunny weekend and the water is blue and inviting. Having conquered my nerves in the pool, I now feel more enthusiastic about getting to play in the sea. We trundle down the cliff path, an excited group clad in neoprene wetsuits full of anticipation. Ian has whet our appetites for sea adventures with tales of basking sharks, sun fish, and dolphins he saw in this same bay last year. We snorkel and duck dive our way around the coast, practising our equalising and our breath hold as we go. I'm no mermaid, and feel ungraceful and cumbersome as I struggle to master the techniques but am alive with the joy of it and falling in love with the underwater world. I'm elated to swim more and push myself further. Ian guides us towards interesting seaweeds such as pepper dulse, gutweed and nori, and shows us hermit crabs and spider crabs lifted from the seabed. It's been a great first day, completed with a wonderful sunset, rolling surf and a motorbike ride to get back to a fine meal in Mawgan Porth and a comfy bed in our B&B.

DAY 2

11AM QUARRY CHALLENGE

We arrive at a strangely bleak yet oddly attractive quarry site with Ian and the crew. A couple of dogs sniff around the campfire pit and I feel like I'm in a sci-fi movie set. The water of the quarry is ominous, smooth and inky dark. The sight of a snake slithering across the water only heightens our nerves, but the sun is shining and Ian is calm and reassuring. There are two buoys in the water marking depths. Our first aim, which we're all given plenty of time to practise and complete, is to swim down to 10m on one of the buoy lines. This is where it's essential to equalise or it becomes painful. The most dramatic change of pressure is in the first 10m of depth and so equalising our cavities is vital from the moment we duck dive down. I discover this is a mental as much as a physical game, having to concentrate and focus at the same time as staying relaxed. Working my way down the line hand by hand into the darkness is daunting, but the reward is the streaks of yellow above, tantalising fingers of light beckoning us back up to the surface.

Next I spend time on trying to improve my duck dive in order to help reach the second goal of finning down to 15m, this time not holding a line. I find it disorientating and hard to remember all the instructions, keeping my head tucked in to go straight and smoothly through the water, and I lose my way in the murky depths. We all keep practising, with a



good sense of camaraderie urging each other to keep pushing.

12.15PM SECOND ATTEMPT

We break for a rest, basking in the sun. Despite our thick suits, the water is very cold and we need to warm up. Then it's back in for second attempts on constant weight. With new determination, I have a go and after lots of tries finally get the hang of finning down to 15m – in fact, I'm so enjoying the sensation of looking back up at the light above while in relative darkness that I bump my head on the quarry bottom. Ian has been a supportive presence every time and gives me a thumbs up as we slowly rise to the surface.

1.45PM TIME TO EAT

A welcome lunch of warming soup and delicious flapjacks is provided by the quarry owners, and we chat about Ian's freedive experiences around the world. It provides incentive to train harder as we hear about adventures with amazing marine life both abroad and in our own UK coast. Ian's a keen spearfisherman and has written a book on underwater foraging, covering not just fish, but edible seaweeds and other plants. Hand-picking lobsters off Newquay was a big lure for him moving to the area eight years ago.

2.45PM BUDDY RESCUES

Hoping we've let our food go down enough, we face the dark waters of the quarry for the last

ABOVE Large and longer-than-usual fins are worn by free divers to help them move around more effectively
BELOW After completing the practical aspects of her course, Susie went in search of interesting underwater species

time. I learn buddy swimming techniques and have to 'rescue' Ian, bringing him up from 10m in order to pass all the practical aspects of my AIDA two-star course. I'm so pleased to have completed it and take time out to just play and dive in the water.

5PM FUN IN THE SEA

After being in the quarry for so long, Ian decides to call it a day there as he still wants us to enjoy the coastline around Newquay. We're grateful he hasn't rushed us to complete our challenges. We drive back for another chance to enjoy our new freedom. Feeling more confident than just 24 hours ago, we snorkel around looking for species to dive down for. I spot a spider crab and am so excited to tell the others that I let it get away. The visibility is good here and it's a beautiful golden evening. There are shoals of sand eels glinting through the water and masses of starfish in the cracks of the rocks.

6.30PM FINISH

We have to leave this magical world to finish the weekend with a multiple-choice theory exam. I'm glad to say I passed, and so gained my AIDA certificate. It was a rewarding two days and I've found a new passion. For nights after, I dream I'm back in that enchanting watery world, and the lure of the light above still captivates me.



NEED to KNOW



There are freediving courses across the UK, using pools, quarries and the coast. Susie used Freedive UK (freediveuk.com) as it guarantees lots of time in the sea.



WHAT TO BRING

All equipment – wetsuit, fins, snorkel and mask, weight belt – are provided, but bring your own wetsuit if you prefer. You'll need your own swim stuff and a towel, and warm gear for after swimming, plus lots of liquid – it's easy to get dehydrated. Freedive UK provides all lunches and a reusable water bottle.



WHAT IT COSTS

The AIDA one- and two-star course is over a weekend and costs £300; or for no qualification pressures, try the Recreational Freediver weekend for £225. There is also a half-day taster for £50, and other courses, including foraging and spearfishing.



WHERE TO STAY

Newquay is a very popular tourist destination, so there are plenty of hotels and B&Bs to suit all budgets. Susie opted to avoid the crowds and stayed out of town in The Seavista (seavista.co.uk) in nearby Mawgan Porth. It has fabulous sea views and serves a great breakfast.



GET THE KIT

*Essential gear for a day of freediving
at the coast this winter*

- 1** Frameless mask, £13, freedivershop.com **2** Oceanic deluxe weight belt, £28, [Simply Scuba](http://SimplyScuba.com) **3** Wave Alga fins, £85, freedivershop.com
4 Patagonia Yulex Nexkin wetsuit, £550, downthelinesurf.co.uk **5** Cressi Lince mask, £41.99, [Surfdome](http://Surfdome.com) **6** Carbon monofin, £245, freedivershop.com **7** TrailProof waterproof duffel, £65, [Aquapac](http://Aquapac.com) **8** Ulysses sandals, £75, [Vivobarefoot](http://Vivobarefoot.com) **9** Snorkel, £7, freedivershop.com

Into the FREEZER

Cold water surfing – what's the attraction? Alf Alderson looks at the dedication, if not obsession, required to paddle out into the waves when it's snowing

WORDS **Alf Alderson**

'The waves are so much bigger and powerful in the winter, and there are fewer crowds, so it's more fun'



It's Christmas Day in Pembrokeshire and, depending on your age, you'll be ripping the wrapping paper off your gifts or preparing for a brisk walk along the beach before settling down to Christmas dinner. Unless you surf. Because if you do, this is the time of year when you'll be more excited about riding waves than opening presents. Forget the single-digit sea and air temperatures and biting winds, the period from late October to April is when the surf action really kicks off for Britain's dedicated band of cold water surfers. The surf is bigger, more consistent and less crowded than in the summer, so what's not to like – apart from the cold?

WAVE WATCH

On my own local beaches of Newgale and Whitesands in South Wales, on Christmas morning – and every other winter morning – there will invariably be a group of surfers huddled together checking out the waves if there's a swell. In Pembrokeshire, we're lucky as the air and water temperatures are relatively mild year round; head across to the North Sea coastline and Yorkshire's thriving surf scene, or to Scotland's wave lashed north coast and stories of scraping snow and ice off car windscreens before driving to the beach are common.

Yorkshire-based surfer Seb Ramsay tells of surfing in South Shields one January: 'The temperature was around freezing and it was sleeting as I put on my winter wetsuit, hooded rash vest, boots and gloves. As I walked down to the beach a local surfer was coming out of the water wearing a sleeveless wetsuit with a flowery cotton shirt underneath! No hood, no boots, no gloves. I asked him how long he'd been in. He said two hours. I managed 15 minutes and only because I couldn't leave until he'd driven off.'

They're clearly made of different stuff up north. But just what is the attraction of paddling out into steel-grey waves that guarantee an 'ice-cream headache' when they crash over your head, when you can sometimes hardly unzip your wetsuit after a surf because your



'Once you're in, the waves take your mind off the pain'

hands are so numb and where so many surf sessions start with a ritual that borders on masochism – squeezing into a cold, wet wetsuit (fortunately, they warm up as soon as you're zipped in)?

Professional big wave surfer Gabe Davies is a good man to ask – he used to be based in southwest France, where he could surf relatively warm waves all year round, but recently moved back to his home town of Tynemouth with his wife and young son.

'I don't mind the cold water,' he says. 'Once you're in, you just keep moving and the waves take your mind off the pain. And wetsuits are so good now that if you invest in good equipment, you can easily surf throughout the winter months.'

'What is the killer for me are those windy car parks – that horrible time just before or after a surf when you're standing in a towel wrestling with a wetsuit and getting blitzed by the wind, hail, sleet, or snow which usually accompany the best British swells in the darkest months of winter.'

SURFING SPOTS

A major attraction of winter surf is the fact that the waves are so much bigger and more powerful. As North Devon surf photographer Ester Spears points out: 'There are loads more spots to surf – places that only work with bigger swells – and it's more fun than summer because of the lack of crowds. It's usually just you and a few friends.'

Those powerful winter swells can lead to 'surfaris' along stretches of coastline you may never venture to in the warmer months of the year. For instance, in a big winter storm, St David's Head in Pembrokeshire will often be submerged by the wash and spray from huge swells despite the fact that it's 70 metres above sea level; surfing the adjacent beach, Whitesands, is not a good idea.

So local surfers will drive north to the sheltered bays and coves of Cardigan Bay which rarely get surf in summer,

but in powerful winter swells can offer up some fantastic point breaks.

Winter can also be a good time to learn if you don't mind the cold as the waves are consistent and the crowds few and far between. Pembrokeshire single mum Anne-Marie Gallagher tells how she and her four daughters all caught the surfing bug in February 2006: 'I threw myself into freezing February waters and dragged my daughters along for the experience, too. Afterwards, I'd drive to the Druidstone Hotel above St Brides Bay and sample one shot of a different whisky every Sunday as a reward to myself for cramming all five of us inside one changing room at Newgale and pulling wet wetsuits, boots and gloves off freezing but happy bodies.'

Where winter surfing was once a sport for the obsessive and hardy (or maybe foolhardy), it's now taken off to the extent that Cornish surfwear company Finisterre manufacture clothing and equipment designed specifically for cold water surfing. And founder Tom Kay walks the walk, saying, 'The north coast of Scotland is a favourite of mine. Sure, it's chilly, but there are plenty of waves waiting to be discovered, and checking out the hidden nooks and crannies of the coastline gives you a real feeling of exploration.'

With the seemingly endless growth in the popularity of surfing and the constant improvement in equipment, cold water surfing is here to stay, and however chilly it may be as you sit in icy seas waiting for a cold, steel-blue wave to roll your way, you can warm yourself with the thought that there's always something to look forward to when you get back on to dry land – summer.

BOTH PAGES, CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP RIGHT
Cold water surfer Oli Adams paddles out in his hooded wetsuit; stormy weather in Porthleven brings with it great swells; the beach campsite at dawn; winter surfers Matt Smith and Noah Lane wait and keep watch for the perfect waves; Newgale Beach in Pembrokeshire





NEED to KNOW

EQUIPMENT

You will need a top quality hooded wetsuit to keep you warm in the depths of winter. Patagonia's R4 hooded wetsuit (£450) is designed for water temperatures between 3-8°C. downthelinesurf.co.uk. You'll also need wetsuit boots (from £30) and gloves (from £20). masimes.co.uk.

CLOTHING

Finisterre offers an excellent range of clothing, from underwear to outerwear, designed specifically for cold water surfers. We particularly like the Continuum raincoat (£295), which you can wear while changing into your wetsuit, and the Domus boiled merino wool shirt (£190). finisterreuk.com.

HARDWARE

If you're a committed winter surfer, you'll already know what type of board you prefer; by and large, you'll need a longer surfboard for more powerful winter waves. A good-value option if you want one board for both winter and summer conditions is Guts Surfboards' 'Mule' (£449). gutssurfboards.com.



WHERE to DO IT

You can surf lots of places that don't generally get waves in summer, such as the south coast of England, East Anglia and Cardigan Bay.

Water temperatures vary from around 7°C in southwest England to 3-4°C in northern Scotland. The lowest water temperatures are not in the depths of winter but in late winter/early spring.

Once you start shivering, leave the water: your physical and mental capacities will diminish rapidly if you get too cold and you want to be firing on all cylinders when you're surfing.

Surf UK by Alf Alderson (Wiley Nautical, £14.99) has info on almost 400 breaks around the UK coastline.



SAIL AWAY

Is there anything more adventurous than setting out on a ship as part of the crew? Alex Fisher visits the Tall Ships Regatta in Falmouth and finds out how beginners can join in this race

WORDS **Alex Fisher** PHOTOGRAPHS **Greg Martin**



Hundreds of sailing ships glide out of Falmouth Harbour in the bright sunshine. Tall square rigged vessels tower over the smaller wooden boats, all moving together in the Parade of Sail, which precedes the start of the Tall Ships race. At sea, on land, in the air, 100,000 visitors have gathered to watch the event, and are transported back to a bygone era, when sailing vessels ruled the waves.

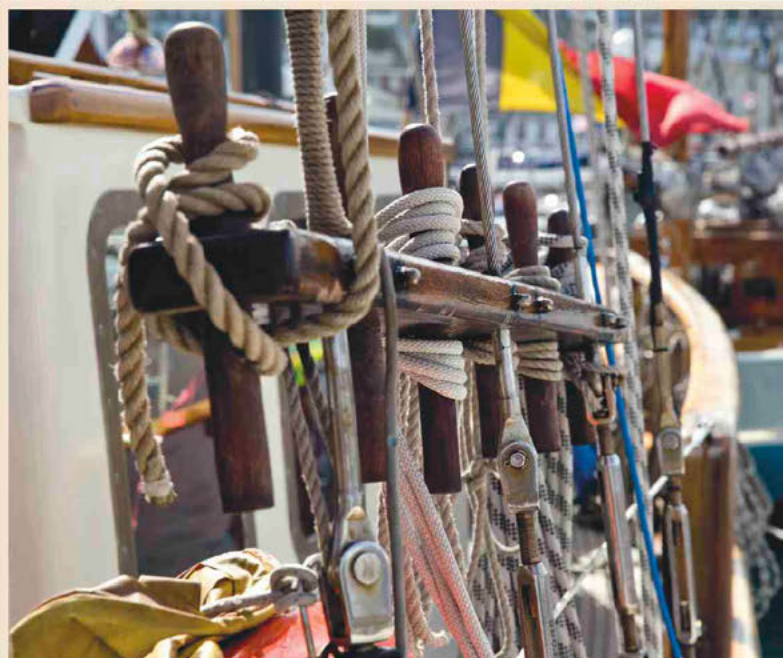
Every year sailing ships from all around the world race each other in the Tall Ships Regatta. The event, which first took place in 1956 with 20 vessels, was originally organised by Bernard Morgan, a London lawyer, as a celebratory farewell to the era of grand sailing vessels. However, the race was so popular, the organisers created the Sail Training International Association, to organise an annual regatta.

The event usually takes place in European waters, and in 2014 it returned to Falmouth, Cornwall, for the third time. Having the third deepest natural harbour in the world, Falmouth has a rich nautical history and is home to the National Maritime Museum Cornwall. 'The Tall Ships Regatta is always a great opportunity to celebrate the town's maritime heritage,' says event organiser Sam Groom. 'Tall ships have shaped the local landscape; they changed the flora and fauna of the area, and are ultimately responsible for the incredible gardens that surround the town today. Historically, huge sailing vessels were built in this harbour, and would set sail from Falmouth on voyages of discovery around the globe. The big estates in the region would pay plant hunters to travel on the boats, and bring back exotic flowers and trees to propagate on their return. It became a competition; everyone wanted to better everyone else, to create the most unusual and interesting gardens. You can see the legacy all over the town in the palm trees, the exotic flowers and foliage.'

FORGING FRIENDSHIPS

The race has always been a friendly one, and today, the organisers are immensely proud of the positive relations it forges. 'This year we had ships from Russia, Poland, Germany, Denmark and Belgium, even the China Sail Training Association had a boat crewed by Chinese students studying in the UK,' says John Hick, chairman of the Falmouth Tall Ships Association. 'You walk

OPPOSITE *Mercedes*, a two-masted, square-rigged sailing ship, at the Tall Ships Regatta in Falmouth. Launched in May 2005, it was one of the youngest vessels in the fleet THIS PAGE, TOP RIGHT *TS Rupel*, a traditional rig sailing ship from Belgium; there were also boats from Russia, Poland, Germany, Denmark and China



HOW YOU CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE TALL SHIPS REGATTA

- There are two regattas in 2015: The Baltic Tall Ships Regatta, which departs from Klaipeda, Lithuania – ships arrive on Friday, 5 June and depart on Monday, 8 June. They then sail to Szczecin, Poland, arriving around Friday, 12 June and remaining here until Monday, 15 June.

- The second race meets in Belfast on Thursday, 2 July and departs on Sunday, 5 July. It arrives in Aalesund, Norway, on Wednesday, 15 July and remains until Saturday, 18 July. This is followed by a cruise-in-company to Kristiansand, Norway, from Saturday, 25 July to Tuesday, 28 July, and a second race to Aalborg, Denmark, from Saturday, 1 August to Tuesday, 4 August.

JOIN THE CREW

To volunteer as a crew member, go to sailtraininginternational.org/get-on-board.



around and hear different languages spoken everywhere. It's remarkable. There are events, such as a friendly tug-of-war, as well as the crew parade, where these young people get a chance to meet, interact and get to know each other. Friendships are forged that may shape the rest of their lives.'

What many people don't realise is that this is not an exclusive event, rather, it is, by its very nature, inclusive. As well as encouraging international relations, the rules dictate that 50 per cent of the crew of every boat must be trainees aged between 15 to 25 years old. You don't need any sailing experience to become one of these young volunteers. Some of these places are taken by sea cadets and sailing students, but for many the race is their very first experience of sailing.

Joseph Nickless, aged 19, took part in the 2014 race. He had sailed a little, but the trip was a huge learning curve for him. 'The youngest volunteers on my ship were a sea cadet and an air cadet; they were more familiar with the practicalities of sailing. However, because it was all new to me, I think I found the experience more thrilling. It was amazing to be out on the ocean, and learn new skills, but it was also the people I met and having to work as a team that I found really inspiring. I made friends I will stay in touch with that I would never have met otherwise.'

For Joseph, participating in the race became a life-changing experience. 'Prior to taking part, I was training in admin. I hadn't felt entirely comfortable with this career path, but I wasn't sure how to change things. But after the race it was clear to me that I had to work with my hands more – as I had on the ship. I wanted a career that was more physical. I came home with the confidence to make that change, and I now have an apprenticeship as a maintenance operative, where I will do things like carpentry and won't sit at a desk all day. I am much happier with the direction of my life.'

OPEN TO ALL

The policy of being open to all also includes making provisions for disabled sailors and crews. Before the race takes place, some of the larger vessels are open to the public. One of the most visited boats was the *Tenacious*, a 65-metre wooden barque built in 2000 with full disabled access. This remarkable ship, the largest sailing ship to be built in the UK for over 100 years, was designed with wide, flat decks, power lifts for wheelchair access, a speaking compass for use by blind crew members and vibrating alarms for those who are hard of hearing. They also have cabins for wheelchair



LEFT The Falmouth Sail Training Ship *Hardiesse* exists to promote sailing for young people. The rules of the Tall Ships race dictate that 50 per cent of the crew of every boat must be trainees between 15 to 25 years old. Through hands-on experience, they get to learn how to sail and work together as part of a team



users, with specifically adapted bathrooms for people with more severe disabilities.

Sail Training International (STI) works closely with charities and schools to ensure that the opportunity to sail is open to all young people. 'Really, this is what the race is all about, young people going to sea,' explains James Stevens, from Sail Training International. 'Experiences like this in your most formative years can have a huge impact on the rest of your life. Yes, we do have sea cadets, but the race also offers opportunities to those with disabilities, and young people who may have been in trouble, or facing some difficulties, or have a disadvantaged background, and these people may be climbing that mast at sea for the first time during the race. It's amazing the impact it can have on a person's life. You get out at sea, and there is no mobile phone signal, you have to work as a team, there's no pretence. There are a lot of jobs to do, from washing up, to pulling the sails, steering the boats, and the whole thing doesn't work if you don't pull your weight. I often talk to people before the race starts, and they are nervous and lack confidence, then a few days later, when the race is over, they are transformed! I believe that it is not just working as a team that does this, it's the innate beauty of the experience of being on a sailing ship out at sea, of spending nights lying on the deck and looking up at the stars – if you've lived in Tower Hamlets all your life, where some of our volunteers come from, you've never seen the stars – and it is the combination of these experiences that really changes people's lives.'

🌟 Go to coastmagazine.co.uk to find out more about coastal adventures in the UK. Tell us your sailing stories on twitter @coastmag and facebook.com/coastmagazine

THIS PAGE, ABOVE An ornate carved figurehead overlooking the waters in Falmouth Harbour RIGHT There are lots of jobs for the young sailors to do on board, including climbing the mast for the first time and pulling the sails. 'It was amazing to be out on the ocean and learn new skills,' says Joseph Nickless, one of the trainees taking part this year. 'But it was also the people I met and having to work as a team that I found really inspiring'



'BEING ON A SHIP OUT AT SEA CAN REALLY
CHANGE A YOUNG PERSON'S LIFE'



NEED to KNOW



Falmouth is a great place to visit any time of the year.



WHERE TO STAY

coast stayed at the Budock Vean Hotel, which sits on the estuary just a five-minute drive out of town. Rooms start at £88 per night (01326 250288, budockvean.co.uk).

WHAT TO SEE

Sat next to Falmouth Harbour, the National Maritime Museum Cornwall is a wonderful day out for adults and children alike, with lots of interactive displays to keep little ones entertained. A family ticket for five people is £32 (01326 313388, nmmc.co.uk).

THE GARDENS

Created when tall ships ruled the ocean and brought exotic plants back to England, Trebah Garden (01326 252200, trebahgarden.co.uk) and Glendurgan Garden (01326 252020, nationaltrust.org.uk) both run right down to the sea.



GETTING THERE

By train: First Great Western operates services from Paddington, South Wales and the Cotswolds to Cornwall. Cross Country Trains (Arriva Trains) operate services into Cornwall from the Midlands, the North and Scotland (*National Rail*, 0845 748 4950). By coach: National Express has connecting services to Cornwall from Bristol, Birmingham and London (nationalexpress.com).

WEEKEND ON... THE ISLE OF SKYE

Beautiful scenery and thrilling adventures are waiting to be enjoyed on this *magical island* lying off the west coast of Scotland





Loch Sligachan lies
in the shadows of the
Cuillin Mountains



Out of season, the Isle of Skye's vast terrain of heather-clad moors, hidden coves and sea-whipped mountain-scapes are all the better for a lighter tread of visitor footprints. January may be one of the chillier months on Scotland's second largest island but pack an intrepid sense of adventure with your walking boots and there's no finer place to see in a New Year.

Historically, Skye has often been described as an island of two halves. To the south, the landscape is dominated by the staggering Black Cuillin mountain region, a formation of jagged peaks and pinnacles that jut some 3,000ft above sea level. Narrow roads below ribbon their way through a lush, pastoral landscape guarded by thick-horned island sheep. The Quiraing – a majestic rock formation left in the wake of a million-year-old landslide – speaks of the untamed and somewhat magical geology of the northern peninsulas some 60 miles up, home to fairy glens, memorials and crumbling castles.

Skye time is measured not in hours of the day, but in distance

to and from an endless well of landmarks and attractions. Alongside the island's stealthy arts and craft scene and award-winning restaurants, there's an outdoor adventure pursuit for all kinds of activities, from boat trips and quad biking to angling and pony trekking. Book-end your weekend and make it a long one.

SATURDAY AM

9AM

BOLD BREAKFAST

I start the day with a steaming bowl of whisky-laced porridge – well, when in Scotland... A **Duisdale House** breakfast – like the hint of tartan in the hotel's boutique bedrooms – is all about the fine balance between tradition and style. Under the watch of lifelong islanders Anne Gracie and Ken Gunn, the four-star hotel has become a quiet hit with the yachting sets that moor their boats in the private jetty. Most weekends Anne and Ken can be found sailing their 50ft yacht *Sun Odyssey* across island waters, and they invite guests to hop aboard; a decadent day on the lochs comes complete with a



ABOVE Coast Features Editor Jessica Johnson spent a weekend walking, fishing and speeding by boat around the Isle of Skye

champagne lunch. With the whole island waiting to be discovered, we go for a classic 12-mile loop drive around the Sound of Sleat, where at each turn we encounter breathtaking hilly vistas and pebbly beaches before heading for coffee at the **The Shed Cafe** (01471 833202; duisdale.com).

SATURDAY PM

2PM

ADVENTURE RIDE

The Isle of Skye is surrounded by even tinier islands and the best way to view them is by boat. Dressed head to toe in waterproofs, I take my seat on the **AquaXplore**, a thrill-inducing, rigid inflatable boat (RIB) designed for offshore use, that speeds out to Canna, Soay and Rum from its station in Elgol.



BOTH PAGES, FROM FAR LEFT The Isle of Skye's rugged coastline; speciality breads are made at the Isle of Skye Bakery Company; the AquaXplore rigid inflatable boat heads for shore; The Shed Cafe at the Garden of Syke (top, left); the Black Cuillin Mountains dominate the landscape; Skye Ghillie's Mitchell Partridge gives Jessica a lesson in fly-fishing BELOW The picturesque harbour town of Portree

We hold on to our seat handlebars for dear life as we crash up and down on the open waves, like some sort of theme-park ride at sea. On the approach to Rum, we hear tales of shipwrecks and see our first sea eagle soaring in the sky above us as if on cue. After a turn around the bay of Soay, we alight on to the Isle of Canna to feast on homemade date slices at the delightfully marooned **Café Canna** (01471 866244, aquaxplore.co.uk).

SUNDAY AM

9AM

BACK TO NATURE

After a breakfast of scrambled eggs filled with delicate shards of oak smoked Hebridean salmon, we head north to the banks of Loch Snizort for half a day's fly-fishing with **Skye Ghillie's Mitchell Partridge**. The multiple roles of a 'ghillie' (a Gaelic word translated as 'man servant') include that of a mountain guide, fisherman and

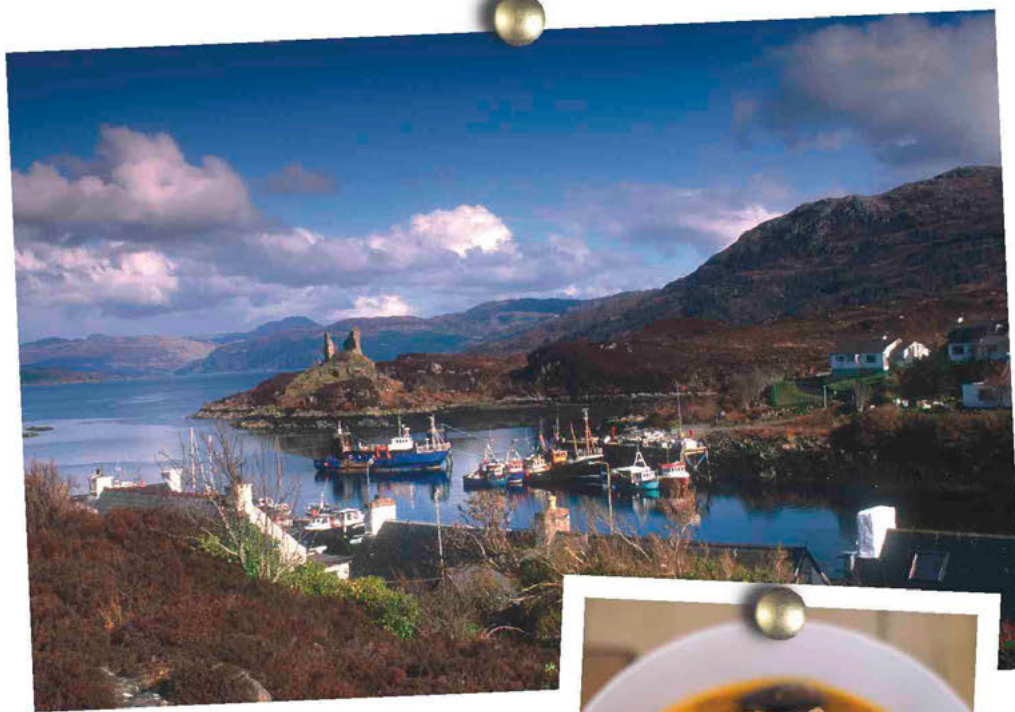
wild camper, and Scotsman Mitchell interweaves these with fascinating nuggets on island history and an intuitive awareness of the earth under our feet. By the end of the morning, I've learned not only how to cast my line with a nifty flick of the wrist, but I can also locate recent otter (fresh droppings are a giveaway), regale the story of local heroine Flora Macdonald and, by prising a clutch of shellfish from a nearby rock, boil up a mid-morning snack of mussels

7PM

TOP TASTINGS

If fine dining is your thing, don't miss out on supper at the **award-winning restaurant** at the Duisdale House Hotel. Head chef Peter Cullen has simmered up modern twists on Scottish delicacies for his seven-course tasting menu. Haggis bonbons and a bite-sized parcel of 'neeps and tatties' whet the appetite before a main course of pan roasted cod loin served with cauliflower purée, asparagus and a salt cod fishcake. The 'pre-dessert', a blackcurrant sorbet, is the perfect sweet finale and means I still have room for a board of Scottish cheeses, which are heaped on to delicious homemade oatcakes.





ABOVE Kyleakin, a pretty fishing village situated on the east coast of the island
RIGHT The menu at the Edinbane Inn includes dishes made with fresh fish



and myrtle tea using Mitchell's trusty kettle. *The Skye Ghillie* offers island adventure services all year round (01470 532690, skyeghillie.co.uk).

SUNDAY PM

2PM

ART AND BAKES

The pastel cottage-lined harbour town of Portree sits halfway up the island's east coast and has recently welcomed the **Skyeworks Gallery** to its growing hub of arts and crafts. Founded by South African couple Barry and Liza Hawthorne, the spacious arts centre is filled with hand-knits, furniture and artwork crafted by local makers. Skyeworks is coupled with Barry and Lisa's second business below stairs, the **Isle of Skye Bakery Company**. We feast on a mouthwatering charcuterie board, served with Barry's infamous 'lunch breads' (mini loaves stuffed and baked with local cheese, meats and herbs). These join a range of flavoured shortbreads and Scottish tablet that he makes by hand in his island kitchen (01478 612669, isleofskyebakingco.co.uk).

5PM

I DO BELIEVE...

I'm a sucker for the idea of a fairy sighting, so off we head to the **Fairy Glen** close to the

ferry port of Uig. In summer, you can't move for fairy-seeking children, who run up and roll their way down the unusual grassy slopes. If you have time for a little more myth and sorcery, head to the **Fairy Pools** near Glen Brittle for stunning waterfalls and still, glassy pools, which are all the more striking for a coat of winter frost.

6PM

SING FOR YOUR SUPPER

Not only do staff at the **Edinbane Inn** serve up a mean pint of Real Skye Ale, but they also hold sessions of live music for the Sunday-night crowds. Visitors are invited to join in with their own instruments or simply soak up a lively fusion of violins, harmonicas and song with a wee dram to warm the cockles. With traditional folk music filling the air, I tuck into a comforting bowl of Cullen skink (a fish soup native to Scotland) followed by a portion of west coast haddock fillet fried in Skye ale batter. Island life, I think, is definitely for me (01470 582414, edinbaneinn.co.uk).

NEED to KNOW



STAY AT...

DUISDALE HOUSE

The hotel and restaurant's New Year package (30 December 2014 - 1 January 2015) features a Bucks Fizz reception, a seven-course Highland banquet and Hogmanay fireworks. Prices start at £530 per person for dinner and B&B (01471 833202, duisdale.com).

PEINMORE HOUSE

This luxury B&B near Portree is a cosy place to unwind after a day out in the elements. Margaret and Don Greer are exceptional hosts and welcome visitors in with afternoon tea. From £135 per night, based on two people sharing (01478 612574, peinmorehouse.co.uk).

SKYE FOREST GARDEN

Nestled in 16 acres of woodland, these bothies (beach huts and wigwam-shaped accommodation) are heated by wood-burning stoves. Prices start at £30 per night, based on two people sharing (01471 844700, skyeforestgarden.com).



HOW TO GET THERE

From Inverness airport, hire a car from Avis (avis.co.uk) for the two-hour drive to Skye. Easyjet (easyjet.com) flies to Inverness from Gatwick, Luton and Bristol airports, with prices starting at £19.74 per person (one way, including taxes and based on two people on the same booking). For more information, go to visitscotland.com.

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Seaside Spa Escapes

Welcome in the New Year with a touch of *relaxation and rejuvenation* – we've sought out some of the best *coastal spas* for a *post-Christmas break*

WORDS *Madeleine Barber and Alex Fisher*

INCHYDONEY ISLAND LODGE & SPA *County Cork, Ireland*

WHY HERE? Based on Thalassotherapy, Ireland's first seawater spa pool pumps water straight from the ocean and heats it to 31°C. You can feel your pores open and absorb the sea's natural minerals, proteins and vitamins. The gourmet seafood at Inchydoney's Gulfstream Restaurant is ideal for hunger quenching after your salty dip.

FACILITIES AND TREATMENTS From enriching chocolate massage baths

and algae leg wraps to Elemis aroma stone therapy and diamond rituals, there's something quirky for couples, mums-to-be and individual travellers. Take a trip to the hammam (Turkish bath) or sauna for a steamy afternoon.

CAN I SEE THE SEA? Wake up to the sound of crashing waves and hop on to your sea-facing balcony for a morning coffee, gaze out into the Atlantic from your spongy spa lounge

or admire panoramic views of the Irish coast from your dinner table.

WHAT DOES IT COST? Treatments start at €40 for massage baths and pressotherapy, and extend to €190 for the most luxurious day package. To stay at Inchydoney this January will cost from €79 per person per night.

HOW DO I BOOK? Call +353 (0)23 8833143, visit ireland.com, or go to inchydoneyisland.com.





THE QUAY HOTEL & SPA *Llandudno, North Wales*

WHY HERE? The Quay perches on the mouth of the River Conwy, where each treatment begins with a private consultation and ends with valuable home-care advice. Visitors dine on locally sourced dishes at The Grill, gazing out to the historic Conwy Castle.

FACILITIES AND TREATMENTS Try an Indian head massage and the REN Moroccan rose ritual for a cultural vibe. Signature

treatments include a de-stress soother and top-to-toe aromatherapy massage.

CAN I SEE THE SEA? Spa-goers can watch boats sail in and out of the marina.

WHAT DOES IT COST? A one-night residential spa package, including a massage and facial, starts at £130 per person.

HOW DO I BOOK? Call 01492 564100 or visit quayhotel.co.uk.



TRUMP TURNBERRY RESORT *Ayrshire, Scotland*

WHY HERE? Surrounded by Scottish coastline, Trump Turnberry is home to The Ailsa golf course, a classic French restaurant and the all-important spa.

FACILITIES AND TREATMENTS Body wraps, scrubs, massages, hydrotherapy, reflexology and aromatherapy are all based on a holistic philosophy.

CAN I SEE THE SEA? Yes – from the rooms, restaurant, lounge and spa.

WHAT DOES IT COST? January prices start at £150 per room per night. Day spa packages start at £97.

HOW DO I BOOK? Call 0800 325 45454 or visit turnberryresort.co.uk.



SALCOMBE HARBOUR HOTEL & SPA *Salcombe, Devon*



WHY HERE? This retreat is home to award-winning chefs, dreamy waterside living and an extravagant two-floored spa.

FACILITIES AND TREATMENTS The winter spa experience is one of four seasonal treatments. Warm up with the hot volcanic stone massage, then treat your skin to a facial and repairing mask before having a manicure. Luxurious facilities include a hydrotherapy pool, private poolside cabanas and a pebble room.

CAN I SEE THE SEA? Gaze out at Salcombe Harbour from the spa poolside, your bedroom and The Jetty Restaurant.

WHAT DOES IT COST? For the winter spa experience, £150; spa breaks, including accommodation, full use of the facilities, lunch at The Jetty Restaurant and a 55-minute treatment, start at £269.

HOW DO I BOOK? Call 01548 844444 or visit salcombe-harbour-hotel.co.uk.



THE GRAND *Brighton, East Sussex*

WHY HERE? This elegant brand-new spa is perfect for an outing with friends. Enjoy a light lunch in the spa café.

FACILITIES AND TREATMENTS Indulge in decadent face and body treatments using all-natural ESPA and Carita products in one of eight spa rooms.

CAN I SEE THE SEA? Not from the spa, but look out the hotel windows for views of the seafront and the iconic Brighton Pier.

WHAT DOES IT COST? A day spa package, including two treatments, lunch and glass of bubbly, start at £90. To stay at The Grand, B&B costs £79 per night with the winter promotion.

HOW DO I BOOK? Call 01273 224313 or visit grandbrighton.co.uk.

THE RAITHWAIT ESTATE *Whitby, North Yorkshire*

WHY HERE? The estate spans over 100 acres and contains two luxury hotels as well as some private cottages.

Wander the gardens, or take a stroll to the shoreline to prep you for your Wednesday evening yoga class.

FACILITIES AND TREATMENTS There's a steam room, Jacuzzi, sauna and four treatment rooms, where you can ease away stress with massages and

facials. There's also a spa for dogs, so your pooch can be pampered too.

CAN I SEE THE SEA? No, but the seaside town of Sandsend is not much more than 500 metres away.

WHAT DOES IT COST? To stay this January, prices start at around £93 per night. Treatments start at £35.

HOW DO I BOOK? Call 01947 661661 or visit raithwaiteestate.com.





BEDRUTHAN STEPS HOTEL & SPA *Mawgan Porth, Cornwall*

WHY HERE? This is the family-friendly sister hotel to the child-free Scarlet, which is just around the corner in this stunning sandy bay.

FACILITIES AND TREATMENTS The luxurious spa has an indoor swimming pool, treatment rooms, a cedar sauna, eucalyptus steam room, lavender caldarium, and a fantastic hydro pool with views of the sea. They use lovely organic products from *ila*. We recommend a body exfoliation followed by a conditioning

body mask, which takes place in their stylish hammam.

CAN I SEE THE SEA? Wonderful views of the beach from the hydro pool.

WHAT DOES IT COST? Lunch, consisting of two-course tapas, and use of the spa facilities is just £30. A one-night mini-spa break, which includes a 30-minute treatment, breakfast and a £30 voucher for food in any of the hotel's restaurants, starts at just £105.

HOW DO I BOOK? Call 01637 861219 or visit bedruthan.com.

THE SPA AT ST ENODOC *Rock, Cornwall*

WHY HERE? This dry spa uses organic products from the new Cornish skincare company *Afyna*. You can also have a great lunch at Nathan Outlaw's restaurant, Outlaw's, which is in the same hotel. A beautiful setting for a day out with a friend.

FACILITIES AND TREATMENTS There are two smart treatment rooms in the

hotel, where you can enjoy a range of massages and facials. If you stay at the hotel, you can use the outdoor pool.

CAN I SEE THE SEA? There are views of the estuary from the Outlaw's terrace.

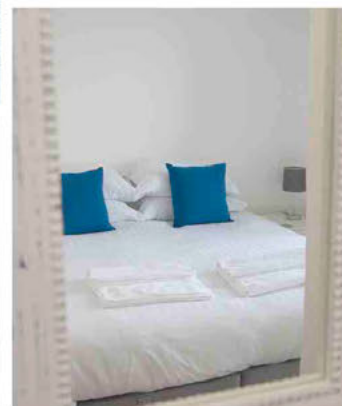
WHAT DOES IT COST? Massages and facials from £30 for 30 minutes.

HOW DO I BOOK? Call 01208 863394 or visit enodoc-hotel.co.uk.



WIN A LUXURY BREAK IN CORNWALL

We have teamed up with Crantock Bay Apartments to offer one lucky winner a coastal break for up to six people



Crantock Bay is a luxury development of self-catering apartments on the north coast of Cornwall. Situated in the hamlet of West Pentire, close to the village of Crantock, all apartments feature breathtaking views across Crantock Beach, Goose Rock and the coast beyond.

GOLDEN SANDS

Surrounded by the National Trust headland of West Pentire, this stunning location allows access to the South West Coast Path and to the golden sandy

beach below. In 2014, Crantock Beach was voted 'Britain's Best Beach'.

The onsite café C-Bay also has coastal views and offers breakfast, light lunches and homemade cakes during the day, followed by a more sophisticated dinner menu (limited opening times during the winter). A newly refurbished indoor heated swimming pool and spa bath are complemented by an all-weather tennis court, which help to make Crantock Bay the perfect all-year-round destination.

This month, **coast** readers have the chance to win either a three-night

weekend break or four-night midweek break staying in Apartment 10, which sleeps up to six people.

HOW TO ENTER

Go to coastmagazine.co.uk and answer the following question by 2 January 2015:

In what year was Crantock Beach voted 'Britain's Best Beach'?

A) 2011 B) 2012 C) 2013 D) 2014

crantockbay
lettings.leisure.club.cafe



TERMS AND CONDITIONS This prize is a break staying in Apartment 10, a three-bedroom apartment which sleeps up to six people. The competition winner must take their winning break in low season, and it must be either a three-night weekend or four-night midweek break. Entries close at midnight on 2 January 2015 and the winner will be drawn on 5 January 2015. The winner will be notified within 28 days of the close of entries. The draw is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Entry is free. Open to residents of the UK aged over 18. Employees of Kelsey Media and their family members are not eligible to win. Only one entry permitted per person, no bulk entries will be accepted. The first correct entry drawn after the closing date will win. There is no cash alternative and the prize is not transferable. If any prize or product is lost or damaged during the course of delivery to the recipient, Kelsey Media will provide reasonable assistance in seeking to resolve the problem. However, it will not always be possible to obtain replacements for lost or damaged goods, and in that event, no financial compensation would be payable by Kelsey Media or their affiliates. We reserve the right to cancel the competition, if circumstances change that are beyond our control. By entering you agree to be bound by all the rules and agree that your surname and county may be released if you win. By providing personally identifiable information when entering this competition, you are agreeing that we may use it to provide you with ongoing information about our products and services, although you can unsubscribe at any time, if you wish to do so. **coast** is a Kelsey Media brand. Kelsey Media will only ever use your information in line with its Multi Layered Privacy Notice. For full details, visit kelsey.co.uk. If you have any questions, please ask, as submitting your data indicates your consent, until you choose otherwise, that we may contact you about products and services that we believe to be of relevance to you.

TEST *the* BEST

THIS MONTH: Treat yourself to a spa at home with these great natural products

Dip your toe in



£6

These soothing Bath Crystals are infused with sea salt and green tea. **WE LOVE:** The Kilner jar container. **BEST FOR:** A luxurious dip without the luxury price tag. amphora-retail.com



£7

This organic Green Clay Face Mask is a great quick-fix for dull, tired skin. **WE LOVE:** That a little goes a long way. **BEST FOR:** Spontaneous pampering. earthzest.co.uk



£8.50

Just a few drops of this Bath Oil will turn your bathroom into a sanctuary. **WE LOVE:** It's free of parabens and synthetic fragrances. **BEST FOR:** A meditative soak. tisserand.com

Plain sailing



£19.75

A limited edition Cleanse & Polish kit from the queen of hot-cloth cleansing. **WE LOVE:** Its orange and mint aroma. **BEST FOR:** Establishing a new skincare routine. lizearle.com



£21

Give sluggish skin a polished glow with this Honey & Sugar Body Scrub. **WE LOVE:** Its organic ingredients list. **BEST FOR:** Banishing the blues. trevarnoskincare.co.uk



£25

Hand-blended in Cornwall, this exfoliator leaves your face feeling smooth and bright. **WE LOVE:** The clean and easy pump. **BEST FOR:** Giving skin a lift. afyna.co.uk

Push the boat out



£33

From spa brand La Sultane de Saba, this Shea Butter melts into skin. **WE LOVE:** Its sister scent, orange blossom. **BEST FOR:** A nourishing winter treat. burntily.co.uk



£36

Grapefruit, apricot and aloe vera combine to cleanse and moisturise. **WE LOVE:** The woody aroma with hints of citrus. **BEST FOR:** Luxury cleansing. aroma-works.com



£85

Massage this Salt Caviar Body Polish all over your body to help detoxify. **WE LOVE:** That it's loaded with essential oils. **BEST FOR:** An energy boost. burntily.co.uk

Make a COASTAL WINTER LANTERN

Light up indoor gatherings or picnics on the beach with these pretty jar lanterns decorated with driftwood, sea glass and shells

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHS *Shore Cottage Studio*

We love these coastal lanterns, which work equally well either decorating a mantelpiece in a seasonal display, or when used to light a wintry seaside picnic out of doors. The best sort of winter picnic involves two blankets, one to sit on and one to snuggle in, and a flask of hot chocolate with marshmallows for the kids or a nip of brandy for the grown-ups. Food must be highly calorific to counteract the cold: cake or bacon sandwiches should do the trick.

If you are anything like us, you will have an odd spare glass jar about the place (perhaps you even buy jam specifically because it's in a nice jar?). Before you send them all off to be recycled, have a go at making a winter lantern.

The candles here stand in sea salt, which sparkles and catches the light, while the scattered spices add a touch of interest and deliciously scent their surroundings. When choosing a candle for your jar, consider its proportions: jam jars require a taller candle, while shorter, wider jars suit a tea light. The coastal charms you hang off the neck of the jar can be as rustic or sparkly as you like to suit your own taste.

As with all candles, do not leave them unattended, and make sure the charms don't overhang the mouth of the jar. Take care after you have extinguished the flame as the jar may still be hot.

WHAT YOU NEED:

- clean empty glass jars
- string or twine
- thumbtacks
- coastal charms, such as shells, beads, feathers, driftwood or sea glass
- candles
- salt
- star anise
- cinnamon sticks



1 Take a ball of string or twine and leave a 'tail' as long as your jar before wrapping string several times around the neck. Tie the two ends together, leaving another long tail.



3 Unwind the string 'tails' so the strands are separated. Thread shells, beads, feathers, sea glass and driftwood on to the separate strands. Make a knot below each.



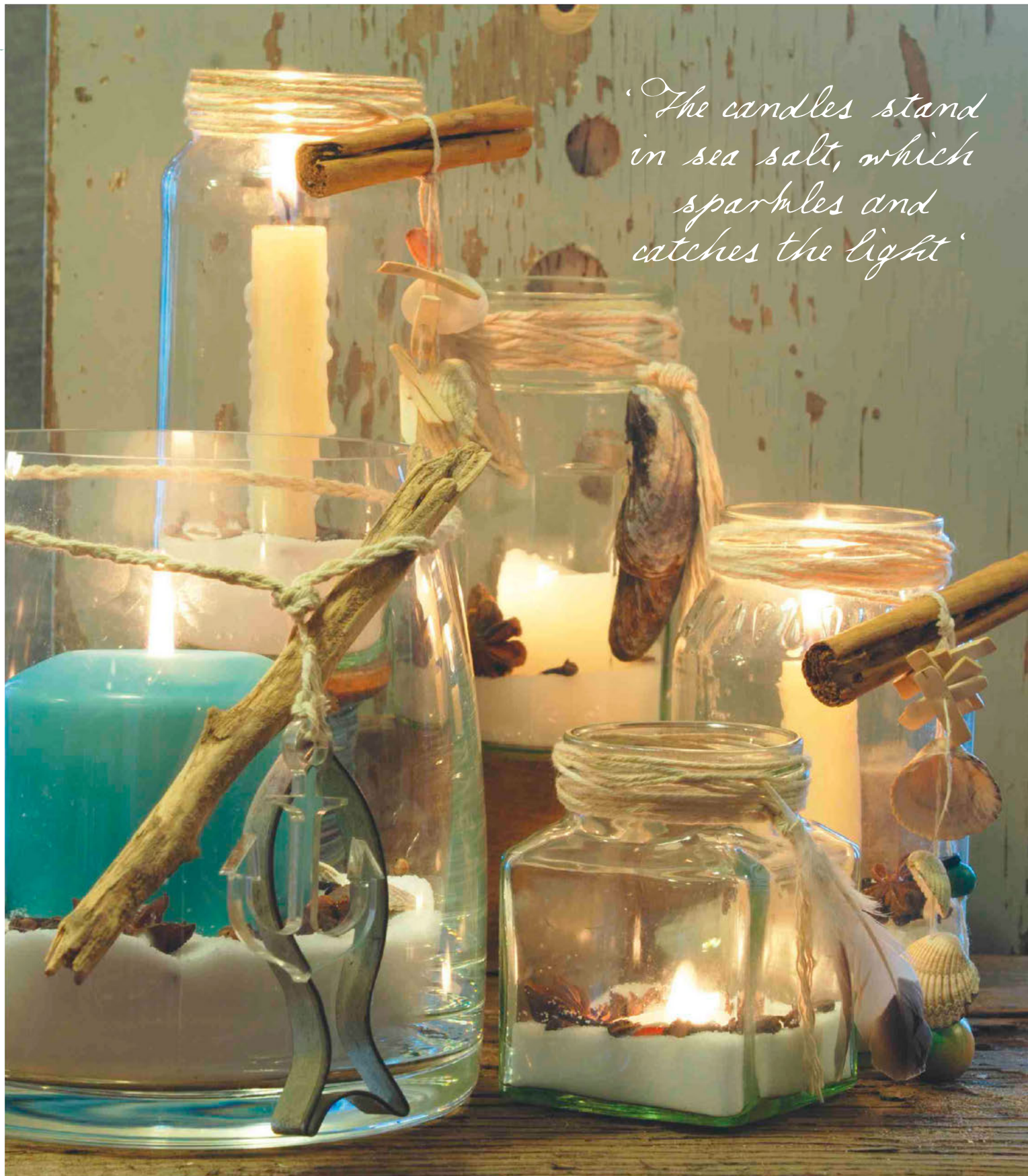
2 Use a thumbtack to carefully punch holes into some shells – placing the shell on top of a tea-light candle will prevent the shell from shattering and protect your work surface.



4 Fill the bottom of the jar with salt, scatter cloves, star anise and tiny shells on top. Cut a candle to fit the jar with a serrated knife, use a tea light for a lower jar. Light with a match and enjoy.



'The candles stand in sea salt, which sparkles and catches the light'



ABOUT SHORE COTTAGE STUDIO

Shore Cottage Studio consists of three generations of artists living and working on the Wirral Peninsula. They run short creative courses taking inspiration from their surroundings in fused glass, photography, textiles and laser-etching. They also exhibit their work and produce commissions. Oh, and there is usually cake. You can book a course or commission a piece on their website (0151 648 6581, shorecottagestudio.com).



COAST BEACH CLEAN

We joined a group of readers on the *East Yorkshire coastline* to enjoy a fun-packed day cleaning up the beach

WORDS **Jessica Johnson** PHOTOGRAPHS **Nigel Fryatt**



What do an old car seat, a pair of glasses and a Spiderman sock all have in common? These were just some of the items picked up at **coast**'s annual Beach Clean event. Clear blue skies welcomed a dedicated army of readers to Flamborough Head, who joined together to help protect our shores from harmful waste and learn about the ocean's habitat.

The Beach Clean, run in association with the Marine Conservation Society (MCS) and Joules clothing, started with tea and Fat Rascals (a local scone) before a morning of rockpooling at North Landing Beach. The small working harbour, circled by giant limestone cliffs, is home to a sand and

pebble beach that revealed a landscape of undiscovered rockpools when the tide rolled out to sea.

Underwater worlds

Navigating seaweed and slippery rocks with the help of mums, dads and grandparents, junior conservationists and welly-clad toddlers were some of the first to discover the wealth of underwater life that lay in wait. As the local fishing boats chugged in to shore with their catch, MCS conservation experts Lauren Eyles and Richard Harrington were on hand, ready to identify everything from butterflyfish and scorpion fish to crabs and a tiny squat lobster. Following identification and discussion of the different species

uncovered, rockpoolers ensured the safe return of every sea creature back to its natural habitat.

After lunch at the North Star Hotel, the crowd were ready for an afternoon cleaning two local beaches; North Landing and Thornwick Bay. Cotton bud sticks, drinks bottles and plastic bags are a few of the threats to wildlife on our shores, reported Lauren, and this is where volunteering to pick up litter from your local beach can make a huge and lasting difference.

Armed with pick-up sticks, refuse sacks and clipboards for monitoring sandy finds, readers split up into groups to take part in a measured survey as part of the MCS' national campaign,



THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT coast readers helped clean the beach at Flamborough Head; everyone enjoyed fish and chips for lunch; Richard Harrington identified sea creatures for six-year-old Evie; coast staff Jessica Johnson, Alex Fisher, Madeleine Barber; all beach cleaners got a generous Joules goody bag; Sophie Kinns and Martine Joule went for a swim; (centre) the coast team say thanks to Toyota for the loan of the RAV4

'Beachwatch'. Across the two beaches, volunteers collected 1,476 pieces of rubbish (841 of these were plastic), while metal fragments tallied up to 129.

'It was fantastic working together to clear up Flamborough,' says Richard. 'The local area is a hotspot for seabirds, dolphins and whales, all of which can suffer the effects of plastic pollution. It was good to know we were leaving the area even better than we'd found it.'

Thank you to Joules, the Marine Conservation Society, Toyota and our wonderful readers for such a great day. *Details of the next coast Beach Clean will be revealed in spring next year. To see more pictures from the day's event, visit facebook.com/coastmagazine*

WHAT readers SAID...

Liz Smith, Ipswich

'I've attended every Beach Clean since its inception in 2008. We enjoyed the rockpooling, which added a new dimension to marine life.'

Sue Thompson, Wakefield

'What a fun event. My grandson Nathan (5) told everyone at home how many animals' lives he'd saved by picking up the litter. We will be back next year.'

Terry Barber, Kent

'My husband and I had a great day. The Marine Conservation Society does fantastic work, and we were glad to help out.'

Lynn Fleming, Manchester

'When I saw the Beach Clean was up north, I jumped at the chance to attend. My daughter India (5) loves animals so it was a good way to show her how to look after our environment.'

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YOUR coast

We'd love to hear your VIEWS, NEWS & REVIEWS on anything coastal

STAR LETTER



WEEKEND WONDERS

I like to keep all my old copies of **coast** so I always have a handy source of things to see and do. We recently visited the Arnside and Silverdale peninsula

after I came upon your article in the February 2013 issue and was looking for inspiration for somewhere new to explore. We stayed in a cottage in Milnthorpe, took a good walk from there to see the Beetham 'Fairy Steps' and stopped for tea and cakes at No17 café. We also visited RSPB Leighton Moss, Arnside Knott, and then had dinner sitting outside the Albion pub, where we were rewarded with this stunning view of a microlight craft flying down the Kent Estuary at sunset. Thank you for coming up with all those great ideas for weekends away.

Kathryn Graham

*** STAR PRIZE ***

This month our star letter wins a jug and set of four seaside mugs from Maggie Mumford, worth £53.50 (01372 844586, maggiemumford.com).



CAMPAIGN SUCCESS

A short note to say thank you again for featuring our fundraiser as a **coast** Campaign in the May 2014 issue. It was an overwhelming success, and we have just announced that the money raised for Brough Bay Association and Castletown Heritage Society has reached over £4,500.

Joanne Kaar

A GOOD MOVE

I've been buying your brilliant magazine for over a year now and was delighted to see your feature *Move to the... Exmoor Coast* (August 2014), particularly when it mentioned Lynmouth. We've just bought a property there, and I can concur with everything that was written, plus it is a

very friendly place. And the journey from Minehead to Lynmouth is breathtaking!

Kate Gibson

DOG of the MONTH



LABRADOR RONA LIKES NOTHING MORE THAN EXPLORING THE ROCKPOOLS OF STEEPHILL COVE ON THE ISLE OF WIGHT

Ced and Marie Wells of Charnwood Stoves

facebook

This month on Facebook we asked you about your forthcoming adventures. This is what you said:

Walk Mill Botanics: Strolling along The Big Strand on Islay in October, taking in the ever-changing light. It's so refreshing and uplifting.

Louisa Crispin Art: Four days in Brighton, but I doubt I'll get to see the sea as I'm in the Corn Exchange for Tutton & Young's Brighton Art Fair.

Christine Cairns: New Year at Bamburgh, Northumberland.

Claire Featherstone: Up to Berwick-upon-Tweed next week by rail. Fab journey, great destination.

Judith Clarke: Walking on the beach in Whitby. Enjoying a coffee at the various coffee houses, when time allows from our B&B. Can't be beaten, even in the depths of winter.

Anne-Marie Mackin: My next trip is to Cornwall. Looking forward to it – and to going back through my **coast** magazines for ideas of places to go.

Patricia Mattinson: My favourite walk is going along the beach from Aldeburgh, towards the 'Scallop' sculpture and beyond. I love it.

twitter

What you tweeted...

@coastmag Can't afford to move to the seaside right now but at least you fuel my dreams #ideas #inspiration

@coastmag Waiting to open this at the beach hut tomorrow @southwold Hello @RomanticCotHols – lovely piece about @Runswick_Bay in @coastmag!

@coastmag Have read the current issue from cover to cover, every single word. Huge thanks to @coastmag for featuring #LOVEmyBEACH in the August issue.

Lovely new @coastmag – campers, #Camber, #Dungeness, @Smoke_House & @ThisisDavina – bumper issue!

At the beach in Southwold reading @coastmag – what could be nicer!



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READERS WHO HAVE STARTED
NEW COASTAL BUSINESSES

10 BEST COASTAL MOMENTS

PLUS A WEEKEND
IN TYNEMOUTH



coast ON SALE 31 DECEMBER

CREATIVE CORNER

Artist John Harrison has been sketching the sea since he was a young boy. Here he talks to us about quirky angles, Rupert the Bear and our shimmering shoreline

WORDS *Madeleine Barber*

JOHN HARRISON SEASIDE INK SKETCHES AND WATERCOLOUR PAINTINGS



We first discovered coast subscriber and artist John Harrison on Twitter during our weekly #coasthour (every Thursday, 12-1pm).

He's a regular tweeter, and when his seaside sketches of Yorkshire towns caught our eye, we sought to find out more about his coastal life and striking artwork.

CHILDHOOD FASCINATION

John explains he was influenced by Rupert the Bear and Superman comics as a child, which has led him to pick up ink pens and soft watercolour brushes in adult life. 'For the last few years, I've worked almost exclusively in a line-and-wash style. It feels the most natural thing in the world to me,' he says.

So why sketch the seaside? When he was growing up, John's family holidays were to the Yorkshire coast and he could often be found flitting between Devon and Cornwall, building up an admiration of the sea that remains with him today. 'I marvel at the fact that whatever we do, the

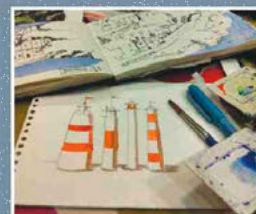
land and sea will always be there, and the best we can do is to adapt,' he says.

Intrigued by the history of coastal villages and the way in which generations have built close-knit communities on our shores,

John explains that 'the higgledy-piggledy houses tumbling down to the coastline have inspired him for his recent work'. He loves the sharp edges of brick buildings and the potential for several perspectives

offered by winding lanes and steep stairways in towns such as Whitby (below). He also aims to avoid postcard-perfect pictures by searching for quirky angles. 'I strive not to over-egg the pudding, but it's difficult to know when to stop.'

'I MARVEL AT THE FACT
THAT THE LAND AND SEA
WILL ALWAYS BE THERE'



JANUARY Diary

Where to see John's seaside sketches and watercolour paintings:

7 December Contemporary Art Market, Tiverton
Ongoing exhibits

- * The Mustard Gallery, Langholm
- * Cloud 9 Gallery, Bacup
- * Adore Antiques, Garforth
- * Poppies, Robin Hood's Bay

Annual shows

- * The Staithes Festival of Arts
- * St Gemma's Art Exhibition, Leeds Grammar School
- * Stockeld Park, Wetherby

You can follow John on

Twitter @DrawnYorkshire

or visit his website at

harrisonartanddesign.com.



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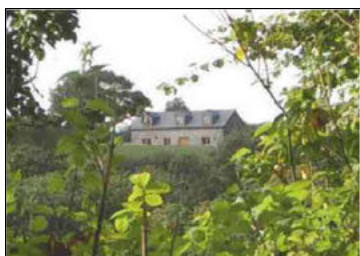


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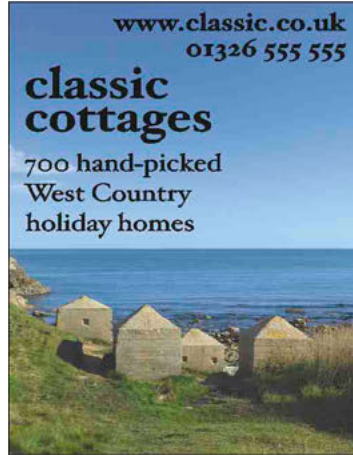
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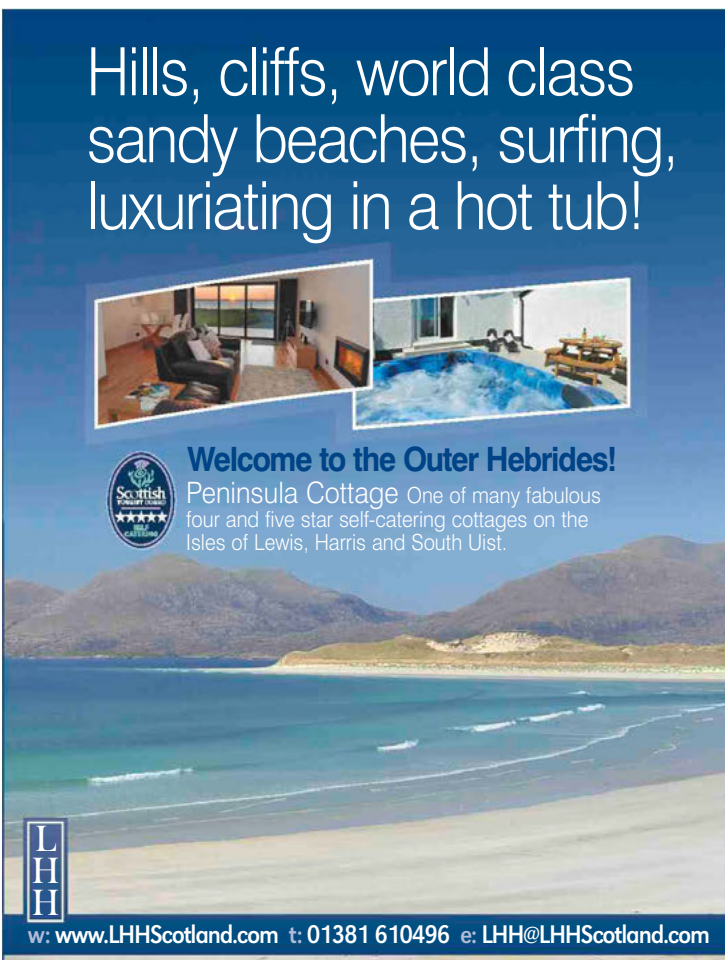
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My coast

Artist *Rob Ryan* describes how he loves cycling through Rye Harbour Nature Reserve in East Sussex, and why illustrated books aren't just for kids

INTERVIEW **Alex Reece**



About four years ago, I was so busy with work I got pneumonia. So I said to my wife, Lorna, 'Let's try to find a little place we can rent and it will be our weekend bolthole where I can leave London and all work behind.' So we started renting a flat in Rye, and we go down there for weekends and a week or two in the summer.

My favourite bit of coast is a path that goes quietly along the seafront from Rye Harbour to Winchelsea Beach. I suppose it's about two miles, and I like to ride my bike there. If I've got my swimmers with me, I might have a dip.

It's a simple, peaceful place. You

walk past people and say hello to each other, which is a novelty for a Londoner. In half an hour, you might see three or four sets of people, and that's about it. It's one of those spots where the sky feels huge, like the Nevada Desert.

In between the two places, there's a boarded-up lifeboat shed and a plaque about the *Mary Stanford* disaster in the 1920s, where a lifeboat full of guys rode out in a rough sea and all perished. On a lovely sunny day, you're really struck by this complete other side to the sea and how brutal it can be.

The Rye poster I designed for coast in 2010, as part of The Great Seaside Poster Revival in aid of the Marine Conservation Society, was to do with the idea of people from London

having this dream about being happier somewhere else. Speaking for myself here, I'm happy being wherever I am, just doing my work.

I don't see myself as a writer. I see myself as an artist who sometimes uses words in his pictures. But I'm doing three books in three years, and illustrating them as well. *The Kingdom Revealed* is the second part of the trilogy. It's for children and adults. I think a child could read it and not feel out of their depth, and an adult could read it and get something out of it as well. Maybe they could rediscover their inner childhood they have lost along the way.

The Kingdom Revealed by Rob Ryan is published by Hutchinson (£16.99).



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